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ABSTRACT

The document reports on a process theater program in which exceptional individuals are involved in a gradual developmental process designed to meet the specific needs of the artist and still create a legitimate product (in this case a musical titled "Fatso"). An introductory chapter considers the use of theatrical performance as a therapeutic process; and Chapter 2 explains that the musical play, which is based on the principle of normalization, is designed to teach handicapped and nonhandicapped people about human errors and problems. Outlined in Chapter 3 are procedures for implementing the process theater method. Chapter 4, which makes up the bulk of the document, provides a subjective day to day account of the method. It includes author's notes and comments about the production as particular events took place. Evaluations of individual participants are provided in a final chapter. Among conclusions was that the method was instrumental in the growth and development of the 12 exceptional individuals involved. (SBH)

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FATSO - A DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL AND A NEW MUSICAL

by

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Joseph A. Parente

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James Howard — Guests-Leads

Kathy Young
Dorothy Parker
Brian Mohler — Guests-Chorus

Carol Anne Schroeder
Virginia Rankin
Rosemary Serrano — Dumpsy

DEDICATION

To my mother and father

Rocco and Christine Parente

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Public Law 94-142 demands "full service" for all handicapped individuals. The law states that an educator's role with the handicapped should not be essentially different from his or her role with non-handicapped individuals. The National Committee, Arts for the Handicapped emphasizes that it is a "moral, civil, and legal right" for handicapped persons to receive the level of services in the arts afforded to non-handicapped individuals. All handicapped persons have the right to learn the arts and to sing, to dance, to act, and to display their artwork.

When given the privilege of the arts, people (both handicapped and non-handicapped) have a duty to always carry a professional attitude towards his or her art. David Congdon, in Mental Retardation states:

> The label "mentally retarded" is often objected to in a sense of diagnosis, but there is also an injustice when labeling is provided to make exception or to discriminate. Such use is contrary to the philosophy of normalization . . . According to the principle of normalization, the life pattern of the mentally

> retarded should approximate that of the normal individual . . . If the quality of singing, workmanship, and social interaction is not sufficient to meet the societal standard for that situation without the special pleading case of "mental retardation," then the mentally retarded should not participate in that situation in that manner . . . By acceptance of less than an adequate performance, incompetence is encouraged . . . The alternative to accepting a "mentally retarded performance" is training the mentally retarded to perform at an acceptable level in some area which is functional to the individual and the society.

Nordoff and Robbins (1965, 1971), have investigated musical activities in the form of games and plays for the use with exceptional children. "The Story of Artaban - the Other Wise Man" was adapted from a story by van Dyke entitled, "The Other Wise Man." "Artaban" was written especially for aphasoid children, with music supporting its entire structure. Another, better known, example is "Pif-Paf-Poltrie," adapted from Grimm's fairy tale, "Pif-Paf-Poltrie and Fair Katie." It can be described as a game rather than a play. Music and spontaneity supports its structure. All theatrical productions with exceptional individuals and literature researched describe and are adaptations of already established plays.

At the 1975 convention of the National Association for Music Therapy in Kansas City, a play was performed by students of a state

school. They performed an adaptation of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." The students seemed slighted because the play was modified for them. They were brought down to an unnecessary level. There is an inherent problem or an inherent criticism in using an established play. Audiences tend to compare the production done by the handicapped with past productions. This defeats the purpose of showing what these students can do. Why develop a show or a piece of theatre which has been done and has been done professionally? The production performed at the convention was well done, but it was not universal--it did not transcend to anyone but professionals working with exceptional individuals.

The idea of a theatrical performance used as a therapeutic process is monumental, but the means and overall design of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" had nothing to do with the immediate life styles, problems, and the feeling of the people involved. The students seemed to have fun doing the play, but the process and the reason for using theatre seemed unclear. Theatre needs to be personal for the actors (students) involved.

The purpose of this research demonstration was to bring theatre up to the level of the students, to write an original musical for them, and to develop a production around them which would have meaning for them as artists and people, which would have universal meaning for audiences, and which would be good theatre. A secondary purpose was to create a professional theatrical production, which

could be instrumental in developing skills and behaviors, and which could help each student involved interact more effectively with his "least restrictive environment" (P.L. 94-142).

Chapter 2

THE INSTRUMENT

The purpose of this play is to teach handicapped and non-handicapped people about human errors and problems. It teaches people that individuals' similarities are more important than their differences, and that each individual has his own strengths and his own rate of development. The musical shows that an individual must accept himself before anyone else will accept him, and that the worse handicapping disability of society is "the handicap of isolation." People can live with disabilities but they cannot live alone.

The new musical "FATSO", adhering to the principles and standards of normalization, is a theatrical representation of a "developmental model," or as stated in the PUBLIC LAW 94-142, an "Individualized Education Program." Character development in "FATSO" is enhanced by the casting of handicapped actors in the roles. The actors develop along with the fictional characters.

In writing this musical, "modification" and "adaptation" plagued the author. For example, the use of a narrator, the use of a familiar story line, or the use of the directors-therapists in some roles, etc., were considered originally, the reason being that the

actors were disabled. However, the final approach used to write "FATSO" was to write it the same way any playwright would compose a musical, i.e. to forget about the actors and concentrate on characterization and overall design.

The particular disabilities referred to in the musical are ludicrous and exaggerated. The message is simple and universal, and transcends to all audiences, handicapped, non-handicapped, young and old. Since the musical depicts a story about people, the setting is a party, a normal surrounding to which all audiences can relate.

The main character's disability is "fat." Audiences can relate to Fatso's weight problem. His disability is physical and obvious to everyone. Fatso is handicapped because he feels "different" and does not like himself, and as a result allows himself to be isolated from the party (society). The character development of Fatso depicts the "handicap of isolation."

Every other character in the play also has a handicap or disability. However, their handicaps or disabilities are not on the surface and cannot be readily seen, e.g. not being able to sing, tell time, dance, or to tell the right hand from the left. Each of these characters depicts a fictional "developmental model" or individualized education program.

The following is a description of scene 1 using the developmental model approach.

SCENE 1

The first guest tells Fatso that he hates parties because he does not know how to sing. He tells Fatso that whenever he attends a party, someone always suggests singing and he gets left out. This is why he hates parties. Fatso then asks him to sing "Mary Had a Little Lamb." He tries, but sings the whole song on one note. Fatso sees the fact that the guest can sing on one note is a "strength" and develops that strength into a complete song, which is sung on that note ("only one note"). The character never learns "how to sing" but learns to accept himself for what he is, along with his "weaknesses," and to develop his "strengths." In addition the guest shares his new song with the other guests and is no longer isolated from the party (society).

The other three scenes follow this design and each in its own way cures the handicap of isolation for the characters.

Although Fatso helps all the other guests, he has trouble throughout the play accepting himself. His disability is much more severe because it is physical and obvious. It takes a character with a similar physical disability to enlighten Fatso. Fatso does finally accept himself and as a result, is accepted by the others at the party. At the end of the play, Fatso and the rest of the guests at the party sing together a song which signifies the ultimate cure of the handicap of isolation.

"Fatso" is written in a musical theatre form. The music and lyrics, and the operetta-style opening and finale provides its structure. The dialog of the actual production of "Fatso" is essentially improvisation and is created by the actors, but a written BOOK is provided as a guide for the director. Improvisation takes place ONLY in rehearsal. For performance, lines are set with the consent of all the actors and the creative consultation of the directors.

The following is a scenario/synopsis of "FATSO - a new musical." BOOK, MUSIC, & LYRICS by Joseph Parente

The setting is a party. The time is now. One by one, guests enter the room, but the tense atmosphere is very unlike a party. One of the guests stands out. His name is Fatso and by his costume it is very clear that he is very, very fat. Everyone at the party roars with laughter at the sight of him, and begin to introduce themselves to each other in song (WHO ARE YOU). Feeling humiliated, Fatso complains about his fate. He cannot understand why he must be different from those he sees. Why can't he be "normal" (WHY AM I FAT?)?

To his amazement, Fatso finds out that, like himself, one of the guests hates parties. However, the reasons are different. This person hates parties because he cannot sing like other people. Fatso teaches him to accept himself for what he is (ONLY ONE NOTE).

While the other guests gather around a table partying, Fatso meets a person who hates parties because he cannot tell time. Fatso helps him out with a song (TICK TOCK).

Another guest admits that he too hates parties because he cannot dance. Fatso remedies the situation by teaching him a "dance" that is "easy as standing on one's toes" (TIPPY-TOE TANGO).

Another guest feels helpless during party games because he cannot tell his right hand from his left hand. Fatso convinces him to be satisfied with what he has - two good hands (THE RIGHT HAND).

A new guest arrives at the party. Her name is Dumpsy. She is not very happy, and by her costume, it is clear that she is also very, very fat. She enters the room singing (WHY AM I FAT? - reprise).

Fatso meets Dumpsy and learns to like her for the nice person she is (I LIKE YOU).

Fatso is left alone once again. He takes another look at the situation and himself (FATSO). Fatso does learn to accept himself for what he is, and as a result the other guests at the party accept him too. They all join in song to celebrate their friendship (EVERYTHING IS HAPPY NOW).

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Chapter 3

OBJECTIVE OUTLINE OF THE METHOD

I. Preliminaries

A. All students considered for production should be enrolled in two classes: Creative Drama and Music Class. Tell all students about show they will eventually be doing. Play one or two songs to give them idea and turn them on.

B. Teacher/therapist should affiliate himself with local community theatre group, so that he can take advantage of resources there. His production will be performed there when ready.

C. Creative Drama Class

1. Learn feelings and how to express them.

a. Practice facial affect. Have students list many different ways of feeling. Discuss their everyday lives: How do they feel? How do they show it?

b. Body affect: posture, walk.

c. Activities to use: "Let's Talk;" "Everybody's Got Feelings;" "What Makes You Happiest of All."

2. Extend discussion of feelings and expression of them to objects and people outside themselves.

a. Use basic theatre games that do not require anything physical.

b. Describe objects; sensory awareness of objects (rocks, bags).

c. Activities to use: "This is a Tambourine;" "If You Had $100;" "What Could I Be;" "A Book, A Book;" bring objects from home--teacher guesses from student's descriptions; sensory awareness of drum.

3. Move into the physical with mime, using things already learned, always building.

a. First have students mime alone and then with others.

b. Use theatre games requiring everything with movement.

c. No speaking should be used.

d. Activities to use: mirroring; touchy-feely activities.

e. Discuss eye contact, space, time; discuss touch (how and when to touch). Discuss how to convey ideas through eye contact, space, time and touch.

f. Mime daily activities and situations; other students guess.

4. Improvisations

a. Telling stories, creating stories.

b. Reading scripts.

c. Activities to use: "Who's That Knocking at the Door;" "You've Just Seen a Friend You Haven't Seen for 5 Years."

5. Use approach that all creations come from students. Teacher/therapist should give challenges, then let students respond. He can make suggestions and help them evaluate their responses.

6. Expose students to community theatre.

   a. Have them attend rehearsal of community theatre production.

   b. Have actors, actresses from local community theatre attend classes and do improvisations with the students.

   c. Have visiting guest actors, actresses participate in a class with students and talk on "What it is to be a star, a performer."

C. Music Class

1. Just get the students singing together. The best way to do this is to learn songs which have something to do with singing together, e.g. "Sing." To find songs about singing together, knowing each other, and getting to know people, consult theatre music, show music.

2. Learn other theatre music. Allow the students to take parts in theatre music other than their own. Encourage acting out parts. Let them hear original cast albums so they can learn to understand the structure of a musical comedy song. Suggestions: songs from "Godspell;" "Happiness."

3. Have them all learn the songs from the play--all the choral numbers as well as the opening. Teacher/therapist should take leads at first and then give them to the students. Choose different students to sing the different leads. This will help in choosing a cast. Encourage acting out again, now using their own songs.
   a. Learn one song at a time.
   b. Each class session, review songs already learned before beginning a new one.
   c. Have them all sing; sing over and over again with everybody doing the parts.
   d. Ask students to pick warm-up song.
   e. Continue to use both songs from their play and other songs until a cast is chosen. Breaks monotony.
   f. Introduce vocal warm-ups.
   g. Expand songs already learned.
4. Watch for fatigue. Student may not make run of whole show.

II. Choose a Cast
   A. Cast of 10 is ideal.
   B. Pick those who can benefit the most, achieve the most personal growth; choose those with the strongest needs who can put on the best show. This will not sacrifice quality of the show, because in order for the play to be performed, it must be good theatre, and in order for the player to be able to make it good

theatre, their skill deficits and problems cannot interfere. This can be accomplished by eliminating their deficits and weaknesses and/or concentrating on their strengths.

C. Students who have been enrolled in Creative Drama and Music classes and not chosen for cast will become the crew and should be enrolled in other classes.

1. Crew will be apprenticed with people at community college; e.g. student working on costumes will work with seamstress who designs costumes for college's theatre department.

III. Set specific goals for each individual in the Creative Drama and Music classes.

IV. Set specific goals for Creative Drama and Music classes as an ensemble. These classes will be joined together as one class at this point.

V. Early Rehearsals with Cast

A. Begin approximately 2½ months prior to tentative performance date.

B. Discuss what play is, what play means, what crew is, what cast is.

C. Plan social activities to build trust in teacher/therapist as a director, e.g. ice cream breaks, field trips.

D. Start developing director/cast relationship.

1. Talk to them as cast:

a. Worry about own part.

b. Have fun.

c. Act like adults.

d. Worst thing to do on stage is nothing.

E. Cast should meet for rehearsals at least 2X each week, 2 hours each time.

F. Always begin class with discussion of plot of play.

G. Some rehearsals, just sing; not necessarily songs of the play.

H. Concentrate on having everyone learn all chorus songs.

I. Choose individual roles (leads).

1. Again, base choices on who needs it the most and who can do the best job.

J. Give cast members copies of the lyrics to the songs.

1. Make keeping track of them a responsibility.

2. Let them study lyrics at home so they won't feel bombarded in class.

K. Begin working on solo numbers.

1. Just concentrate on singing the songs, learning the words.

2. Wait until one lead has his song very solid before moving onto the next lead.

VI. Improvisations

A. Improvised scenes will lead into songs.

B. Take songs as point of departure for improvisations: What should be said to prepare audience for song in most creative way possible.

C. Read off the suggested lines, discuss the scene, and then go ahead and improvise. Students should never see the script or the suggested lines. Explain to the students that the script is actually theirs.

1. Let actors watch others, including director, play the scene.

a. Begin with student and professional doing the scene, then two students.

2. Let actors play all roles and learn to react to all lines.

3. Let whole school try improvisations, letting cast watch and learn. Do same scene over and over with many different people.

4. Let actors take ideas from their own improvisations and from the improvisations they watch and then choose their own lines.

a. Director can weed out bad lines and keep good lines and ideas, helping students evaluate their own scenes.

D. Always incorporate new and good ideas students may come up with when rehearsing their improvisations.

E. Tape rehearsals for later student evaluation.

VII. Choreography

A. Involves creating dances for the production.

1. Dances are series of clearly defined movements suggested by tempo, mood, and dynamics of the songs of the play.

2. Movements should reflect feelings, ideas, and thoughts that students are trying to project in their play.

B. Occurs once songs have all been learned and once the improvisations of all scenes have been set.

C. As students continue practicing songs and rehearsing improvisations, rehearsals can be expanded to introduce them to the idea of moving.

D. Students should be asked to suggest appropriate dance movements for their songs and to analyze as a group the dances they create.

E. From these actions, the best movements will be chosen by director/choreographer.

F. Unlike the improvisations, dances should be a set of clearly defined specific steps.

VIII. Later Rehearsals with Cast

A. Begin approximately six weeks prior to tentative performance date.

B. Expand rehearsals to 5X per week, 2 hours each rehearsal.

C. Continue to go over important points:

1. Worry about own part.

2. Have fun.

3. Act like adults.

4. Worst thing to do on stage is nothing.

D. Continue to discuss plot of play each day.

E. Once songs are learned, begin to block scenes.

1. i.e. stage actions, movements and positions of cast during songs (does not include dancing).

2. Begin with opening number.

3. Once opening number is established, rest of scenes will follow in order.

4. Block one scene at a time, working on only one scene a day.

a. First work with leads and then bring in chorus members.

5. As the opening scene is fairly crucial, block it and run through it every day.

IX. Philosophy of Process Leading Towards Performance

A. Steps leading toward performance are far more important than performance itself.

B. The play comes from the students.

1. Director should give challenges and let students respond.

C. Students write their own script and choreograph their own dances.

1. Only thing students are not doing themselves is writing the songs and lyrics.

D. Timing is crucial. Play has to build. Can't repeat same rehearsals, same activities, same discussions all the time. Director must not let play peak too fast. Must direct it to peak at right time.

E. Constant on-going problem of dealing with psychology of students.

1. Need to motivate them, to keep going and to keep working harder.

a. Attention and approval of director, anticipation of performance on stage, small performances for other students and friends can all serve as motivators/reinforcers.

F. If cast is asked to sing a song or perform a scene already learned, ask students to say when they're ready to do so.

X. Discussions

A. Director talks with cast each day for few minutes:

1. What play means, what it's trying to do.

2. How play relates to students, to their lives.

3. What more students can put into play to get point across and make it best possible production.

4. Format of play; sequence of events; what story is about; and what implications should be evident from acting, singing and dancing.

XI. Finale

A. Culmination of everyone and everything.

B. Ask students to keep in mind <u>all</u> things they have discussed and put into play up to this point.

C. Learn song, block scene, improvise actions.

XII. Preparation for Performance

A. Let students say when they are ready to perform. Then schedule performance date for two weeks later.

B. Begin spending all of class time on play. Expand rehearsal time to 5X each week, mornings and afternoons.

C. Begin refining finalized scenes.

1. Nitpick on musical quality (pitch, dynamics), and theatrical quality (space, projection).

D. Begin putting songs in sequence during some rehearsals.

1. Go straight through everything set without stopping.

E. Take students to community college to tour theatre, meet crews and casts there.

1. Let them learn about what goes into being a cast.
2. Let them get used to stage and theatre where they will be performing.

F. Invite guest audiences to practices.

G. Invite professional actors, therapists to rehearsals to help evaluate.

H. Use stage as much as possible for rehearsals till performance.

1. Attempt run-throughs of show as much as possible.
2. If run-throughs don't work, just rehearse scenes and numbers and work up to run-throughs.

I. Discuss set, props.

1. Make students responsible for making sets, finding props.

J. Constant talks with cast.

1. Keep them trying, keep them learning.
2. Point out their progress (memory, attention span, co-ordination).
3. Discuss play as whole, process they've gone through.
4. Discuss meaning of handicapped.

K. Keep psychological push going.

1. Director's energy level needs to be 6X greater than students'.
2. Explain that putting on play is a life process.
3. "You can do it! If we don't get it today, we'll get it tomorrow."
4. Push them to be the part of them they have never released.
5. Above all, stick with them until they get it, until you and they are satisfied.

L. Ultimate realization of goal: when students think play is theirs and they don't need director anymore.

XIII. Performance!

Chapter 4

TAPE-DIARY TRANSCRIPT OF THE METHOD

MAY 1, 1977 to JUNE 17, 1977

The following is a literal transcript of a daily tape log. It is a subjective, day-to-day account of the method. The diary logs the events from March 1, 1977 to June 17, 1977. It includes author's notes and comments about the production as particular events took place. The objective outline of the method is based on this transcript.

March 1, Tuesday, first day of the thesis.

One o'clock class and two-fifteen class. Eight or nine students (a lot were absent). I told half the class about "Fatso" and played "La, La" song. They were very excited on introduction to the show. Then we did a couple of games on tape. We did an interview (improvisational) on tape and Joe Fabbri played the announcer. Then we listened to it and criticized Joe because he took over the whole show. He crowded the show and the students knew it. Then we did it another time, and Dorothy Parker, a new student, did the announcer and she was fairly good, she did a good job. She faded in and out--she's a little spacey. And then we did some storytelling that didn't

work so well as anything else, maybe it was too difficult for the students. On the thesis, I see Dennis Kroon very good for it, I see Joe Fabbri very good for it. I'd like to see Barbara Beckwith and Rosemary Serrano get into it. There are three new students, one Denise Espejo, she's very, very, very, very shy. Walter Bigall--he's OK but they have a very big lack of imagination. There are about four students with good imaginations including Joe Fabbri. I talked to Roxanne and she has this test on self-image using art therapy that she has given almost everybody a pretest. This may be one of the pretests, she will give a pretest and once the production is done, she will give a posttest and I could use this in the book along with the IE, along with the WISC, along with the Vineland or the PAC, that's already been given. So far these are the only tests.

March 3

With the Thursday class we took a different approach. We did the "Let's Talk" thing with "What Makes You the Happiest of All" and we asked each one of them what makes them the happiest of all. Then we did an improv grocery store and everyone had to decide what they were going to buy at the grocery store. And we did "What Could I Be," what would I be if I couldn't be me. And I did this one chant called "A Book, A Book, this is a book. Take a good look. Do you see, Do you see. What else can it be." And I did the improv on that. This is to get them into some theatre games. I took them to see a rehearsal of "The Lark" on Sunday, the 6th at one o'clock and Stanley

and Dennis stayed with me until 9:00 P.M. They stayed for the notes, saw the whole show, saw us put up the lights, check the lights, change the lights, redo each scene, plus a full run through. Barbara was there until 6:00 P.M. Janice, Bob and Walter came to see the show. Then they found out we had some technical difficulties. I told them to go home, but that the show will be repeated for them on March 19th. They are really interested and they really got off on it. It was a good sign for "Fatso."

March 8, Tuesday, 1:00 class - Creative Drama

I started off with "Let's Talk." I made up this chant--"Let's talk, let's talk. Don't be left behind. Say the first thing that comes into your mind." So I used that and they all decided what was in their mind. Then I asked them if they had a $100, what would they buy at the store. Then we talked about their favorite TV show and they each got a turn. Then one of the kids, Brian, brought in rocks and I had them touch them and tell me how it felt, looked, smelled, and sounded. Then we discussed what was the difference between a book and a bag. They both open and they are both made of paper, so that made them the same. So I played devil's advocate and they told me why they weren't the same. It turned out to be very good that way, with them telling me. Another chant that I made up was to describe a book in another way. Like look at a book and tell me what else it could be. (Book chant)

March 9, Wednesday

This is the "old" crowd, the 1:00 class. We'll have them from 1:00-3:00 from now on. I will teach them singing. We learned "Who Are You?" from "Fatso." I took the part of Fatso, and it was easily learned and they like it. So that worked really well.

March 10, Thursday - Creative Dramatics

We started off with "Let's Talk" (repeat chant). We talked about feelings and how one feels with the song "Everybody's Got Feelings" by Hap Palmer. I took the tambore drum and we used it to feel, to look at, to hear, and even to smell and we wanted to know what else this drum could be. We used "It's a drum, it's a drum. It has a sound and it's round. Do you see? Do you see? What else can it be?" It's based on the same theme as "The Book."

March 11, Friday

Cynthia Avella and Jim Delesandro and this girl Robin, one of Cynthia's friends from LA came over to the school and were working with the kids. In the morning we just showed slides, but in the afternoon we really got into drama. We did some real good improvisations. We used "Who's that knocking at the door? at the door, Who's that knocking at the door? at the door, at the door. Who could it be? Who's that knocking at the door? at the door, at the door. Let's go and see." Myself and Cynthia and Jim were the ones knocking so that we could initiate an action so that the kids could respond, and they were really responding well.

March 14, Monday

We were trying to get them to get into improvising the scenes. Today I had a singing music class. I wanted to get them into singing the songs from the show. My second hour on Tuesday and Thursday, and my hour on Monday is the same thing except it's with a different class. Monday we sang "Sing, sing a Song" and Janice got into that, she really started singing. We did "Who Are You" and I introduced them to "Everything is Happy Now." I played the part of Fatso and they really enjoyed that. There's only one problem, we have a hard time saying "Everything is Joyful Now." It's just hard for them to sing that. "Everything is happy now. Everything is cheery now. Everything is joyful now." It was just hard to get it out.

March 15

Today I had a creative drama class and we had a creative singing class, I guess I could call it. In the creative drama class, we started out with me singing that chant that we used before "Let's talk" and I did it as a song with the guitar. Then we used "Everybody's got Feelings" by Hap Palmer. Then they brought something from home. They didn't show me, I had them describe it and I would try to guess what it was. Cynthia came to this class too. She sat in on my two classes. It was good for them to see her doing it too because they really got into the idea that she does it for a living, and the whole thing that if she could do it, they could do it. Sometimes Cynthia gets confused at it, and it was good to show them that even though you

are professional you still get flustered and embarassed and they aren't the only ones. Each student described what they had and they felt. I'm doing a lot of touchy-feely things. Then I drew up four situations: one was going grocery shopping; one was getting dressed for school; one was reading a newspaper; and the other one was playing jacks, which was a goody. And they were supposed to do it and the others were to say what it was we were doing. That's the pantomime thing, doing the pantomimes of tastes and smells and things--just being aware of their surroundings. In the singing class I've gone by this procedure: each student sings his/her own name as the play instructs. One student is chosen to be Fatso. I did Fatso on Monday. Joe Fabbri was Fatso last week and didn't want to do it today, so Dennis was Fatso and he did it well. When picking a cast, it works to let them all sing and sing it over and over and over again with everybody doing parts--just weeding people out and watching them all sing. Those who get tired of doing it may not make the run of the show. And if they don't make the run of the show, then I'm in trouble. What we did today, was that we started out with my song. What was really great was that the students usually start off with "Sing, Sing a Song" but they didn't want to do that, they were tired of that and they wanted to do my new song, the one I did "Who Are You?" as their warm-up song, so we did it. We also used the show tune "Happiness" from Charley Brown, and everybody sings a part. It's just getting them into the idea that everyone has a part, but it's all a whole and

everybody is a part of a whole.

I have goals for Creative Drama Class:

1. Learn feelings and how to express them.
2. Describe in detail the physical objects.
3. Mime the five senses.
4. Mime feelings and regular activities.
5. Mime a suggested scene.
6. Mime scenes with others.
7. Improvisation with two or more people.
8. Use situations from the play within the selected scenes.
9. Tape what they say, weed out the bad and set the scene. Now they are writing the play with direction.
10. Connect the scenes with the songs.
11. Do it.

Numbers 8 - 11 will have to be done with the class who will be the cast of the play. I will pick them then. This will be worked out later.

Music Class:

1. Just sing together.
2. Learning songs about singing together.
3. Learn songs from the show.
4. Learn other show tunes, tunes where students must take the parts.
5. Put the parts of the songs together.

6. Learn all the songs from the play.
7. Pick those who will sing the various songs.
8. Perform the songs as if they were scenes themselves. Here's where the lyrics may change a bit.
9. Tape the activities.
10. Connect the songs with the tunes. Do it.

Numbers 7 - 10 will have to be done with the cast of the play. By the time we reach 7, 8, 9, and 10, the Drama and Music classes will be getting closer. By the time we reach 9 and 10, the cast will be a class in itself. The rest is history.

One thing about dance in the show: the best way to do it is through creative dance (we discussed this today), just like we're doing with creative drama and getting the script from that and what they do best, we could do the same thing with the dance. Given the students the song and ask them what they think the dance should be. They do it, you see their best points and you weed out the bad and pull in the best, and do that just like the lines, weeding out the bad lines and using the good lines. So the creative dance may work well which will bring them into picking the cast, and once the cast is picked, they will take their own songs and choreograph them by themselves, but it will come out of them, <u>with direction</u>. So what it is, is you get improvisation with direction. So the students themselves are choreographing and writing the script. The only thing they're really not doing, is writing lyrics to songs and songs themselves. But with the

direction, they are not technically doing it, we are suggesting it and they are doing it. They feel it is coming from themselves.

March 21, Monday

They finally learned the right way to sing the song "Who Are You," and "Fatso" with the "Who Are You" reprise, with the big ending--I taught them the big ending. They sang "Fatso" on A, up to C, and back on A, then Fatso sings "Fatso"--E, and they sing G#, A. And that's how they learned the song. I'd like Janice for the chorus, James G. Howard for the chorus, and James H. Howard (I'm not sure yet about him). I'd like John Ezell for a supporting role and a speaking role, Janet for a speaking role, Stanley for a speaking role. Bob Keller--no. I did some vocal warm-ups and I did "Happiness" from Charley Brown. We did the whole "Happiness" and everybody took a part and it worked pretty well.

March 22, Tuesday - Creative Dramatics 1:00-2:00 P.M.

We went through "Let's Talk." I only allowed about 5 minutes for that and then we did Hap Palmer's "Feelings." I had them look at me, at my eyes. It was a good eye-contact exercise. They looked at my eyes, and I forced them to look at them and I looked at them for who was supposed to tell me what feeling they had. Then I made up cards for little things that they can do like grocery shopping, reading a newspaper, washing a car, washing a dog, flying a kite, playing tennis--these things I put on cards. The first thing I did was hand

out cards randomly and the students were supposed to act out the activity. Then I let them choose three cards and pick one out of the three and do it and the rest had to guess what it was they were doing. The first time everyone just said what they were going to do, and then did it. The second time, people had to guess. Then at the end of the class I had two sets of two volunteers. The first two were Walter and Brian. They stood up facing away from each other. I told them when I said "go" they were to face each other eye to eye. This was to be the first time they'd seen each other in five years, they were really good friends. Then I said I would snap my fingers and they were to take it from there. Then I asked Rosemary and Dorothy to do it, the same thing, and they did it. The only difference was that they touched each others hand. I tried to get it from there, the whole idea of touching each others hand. When you see someone you haven't seen in five years, you would touch. I'm getting into the touching idea--the whole idea of everything coming from them. Alice suggested that Jim (Delesandro) and I do it. (Jim and his friend Charl Lee came to see the class today.) But as I told her later, it wouldn't be a good idea for Jim and I to do it because I want it to come from them. If they saw us, they would just recreate what we did instead of creating what came from them.

March 23, Wednesday

Singing class learned the "La, La" song. I decided that the "La, La" song should be called "I'm Going to Shine" and everybody sings

"la, la, la, la, la . . ." and they keep on building that, and the speaker says "I'm going to shine" and everyone ends with "He's going to shine." We learned the last song, and we finalized "Who Are You." The "La, La" song was easy to teach. The kids are all getting introduced to this kind of stuff. Some can go faster and farther and they will, the others will be satisfied with what they accomplish. I have decided that everybody will be involved in some way in the show, not as extensive as the cast will be, but in some way they will be involved. A little side note: I was talking to Mr. Muller tonight about what we call them, and we call them students, and it's the perfect word for them--students--because "students" is such a progressive word. They are not going to be at the same level all the time, they're learning, they're progressing, they're becoming something else. This is a unique group, the emotionally disturbed--mentally retarded, because they know there is something wrong with them, but they don't know what to do about it. They have a real weak self-esteem. I have decided that Stanley might be good as Fatso. I haven't completely set my mind to that yet. But Stanley looks pretty good as Fatso. I may double-cast it, use Stanley as Fatso and Dennis as Fatso, but Dennis wanted to play in the band.

March 24

We had a late class today. In my drama class, my timing was really off. We started with "Let's Talk," and with "Feelings" and I did the eye-contact routine, where everyone had to look at me, and

when I looked at them they had to tell me what makes them happy, etc. Then acted out the mimes, with the cards. We didn't get into any group mimes or dual mimes today. We just did the card routine. I got into really heavy mime stuff, like what to do; how to pull their hands, how to move their hands, how to touch things, how to feel frogs, how to pet dogs, little detailed things. My music class at 2:00 went very well. We did "Who Are You" the right way with "Who Are You," Fatso's song, and "Who Are You." Joe gave me a lot of trouble today. He was really complaining today, about what I didn't know. I told him to sit by himself and I didn't want any comments. We went through "Who Are You." We went through "Happiness." I taught them the "La, La" song, which is now called "I'm Going to Shine," which I went through yesterday. Then we went through the last song, "Everything is Happy Now." We went over that and over that and over that. Then Joe said something to me that was really weird. He said he understands that we have to review it and review it and review it, and that it's important that we do this because the show won't make it--it won't work like clockwork--if we don't. Alan came by during my music class and looked in on the class. Later on I talked to him and he was really impressed by the show. He also said that he knows the President of Delta College. I talked to Al and he's interested in doing the show at the Little Theatre, so now with the administrative connection, we're going to do it at Delta College as a big opening. I found that out today, March 24. So we learned the "La, La" song, the last song and "Who Are You." The next song I think we should learn is the telling-the-time song or

the dance song--but we'll get to that.

March 25, Friday

I had everybody with me--the whole class, the entire group. Those who hadn't even heard the songs before started singing them. We did "Who Are You," and I did "Why Am I Fat" and they did the ending of "Who Are You." We did the ending of "Only One Note" (title was just decided). The cast would sing the La, La's with the central character of that scene. I decided to teach them all the choral numbers before I started picking who was going to do what. I decided that this was the week to teach the rest of the choral numbers. The hardest one will be "Tippy-Toe Tango." I decided on the choral numbers: "Who Are You," "Only One Note," "Tippy-Toe Tango," "I Like You" and the finale. So I have yet to teach them "I Like You" and "Tippy-Toe Tango." The pattern would be to go over "Who Are You" at the beginning of the class, then go to "La, La, La," teach them a new song and then go into "Everybody's Happy Now." That will be the development of the class from now on. We taped them singing the song and it's really well done and it's really good. They can do it and it's going to work. We'll be opening it in June. Now I have to worry about things like bureaucracy. Since I'm going to open big, it's got to be known two months in advance how it's going to open big. I only have available about 2 weeks in April, and the cast must be chosen in April and we have to be on our way in May. So, now, on March 28 it looks really well. I've changed a couple of other things. Fatso will probably be

Stanley. There will be a six member chorus. The cast will be twelve. There will be six main characters; the two leads, Fatso and Dumpsy, who are the only ones that don't use their real names, Guests 1, 2, 3, 4; Guest 1 sings "Only One Note," Guest 2 sings "Tick-Tock," Guest 3 sings "Tippy-Toe Tango," Guest 4 sings "Right Hand." Of those four songs the chorus members are only singing two; "Tippy-Toe Tango" and "Only One Note." "Tick-Tock" and "Right Hand" are separate and have to be done with Fatso and the particular guest. Once Fatso starts learning these tunes, he will sing it together with the chorus (ex. Fatso and Dumpsy singing "I Like You" together, then with the chorus). The chorus will already know their parts, and I will have them reviewing and reviewing because everyone will be in the chorus as everyone (all 12) is on stage all the time. The 12 who are finally picked will have to be at all the rehearsals, so that they will have to be one class. I don't know how this is going to work class-wise, but we'll see. One note: It's a frightening position to be in because you want to use the worse people so that they can benefit the most, but also you want to have a good show, and to keep the final cast together. It's a real hard position to be in because I like clear clean-cut shows and I like to pick a cast who can do it, but instead I have to pick a cast that can benefit the most, and it's a real thin line. I just hope I can pick the right people for the parts. I think the Friday routine of having everybody get together and go over the songs that we've learned will be great. If I could have like an hour in the morning to go over

all the tunes we learned that week, it would be terrific, even with the art people. I'm going to ask them if they'd do that.

I have some little theatrical things I want to say:

When a script is finally developed, it's developed in the best way for the students and the steps to take are to take them a little bit at a time. I am able to take them a little bit at a time because I'm working it a little bit at a time. Once you have a script, it's going to be hard to go a little at a time because you're going to want more than you could possibly get, but you can go off into tangents and just do some things and experiment with it and do stagey things and then just forget about it later. But it will come from them. Pam speaking softly "Everything is Happy Now. . ." gave me the idea of whispering and everybody holding hands and touching and whispering and then bring it out to the audience. The "Who Are You," where everybody is saying "Who are you, who are you" and everybody pointing at Fatso. Sometimes they make a mistake, but it's a legitimate mistake and it can be used theatrically. The "La, la. . ." when everybody is singing a different la, la, la can be used theatrically. So I even want to use the mistakes along with the good things. That's important I think. So once the play is developed as a play, the steps are more important than the play itself--how we get to this point, and how things are coming from them. What's being said is not as important as how it's said or the inflection on the words or things like that. The most important thing is what's coming from this person or how it could be

used theatrically to put forth a point and to use what they have the best to put forth that point. That seems to me to be the most important feature of this, that everything is coming from within. One thing I want to say here is that this is Performing Arts Therapy--we're developing a new type of therapy.

I was genuinely worried about the fact that in picking people for the show, whether to pick them because they need it for their own personal growth, or whether I was choosing them because they would be good. Then I thought that there's a dual process here, we must worry about the people who can be good too, because they have got to be good for the whole project to work. Because if they really stink, then nothing will be accomplished.

I'm talking about March 29 and 30, Tuesday and Wednesday

On Tuesday, I did creative dramatics. We started off with "Let's Talk. . ." (sung). I solved one problem--two of the girls got into a fight at lunch time, so I solved that problem. Then we went through "Everybody's Got Feelings." Then I discussed what the play is, what the play means, what a crew is and what a cast is. I explained to them that the cast are the people on stage, the actual people who do all the acting parts--the singing, the dancing, and all the acting. Then I explained what a crew was--the crew was the costumes, the painting of sets, make-up, all the back stage things. I thought about who the cast should be--I asked them who would like to be in the play first. Right now, I have over 15 and I only need 12. The play is

supposed to be put on at Delta College, and the way I see it according to Alice, (it was her idea) that we incorporate the play in with the night of the performance so that those who don't get into the play still get a chance to perform. For example, Walter Bigall. I don't know if he will be good for the play, but he will be good in performing, just to perform. Somebody like Janice would be good at performing, but wouldn't be good in my play--wouldn't make it. Yesterday, I decided Stanley would be Fatso. In fact I decided that Monday, Stanley will be Fatso. Dumpsy is hard to decide. She comes in at the end--she doesn't have to be really, really, really good because she just comes in at the end. The kids are starting to get into the idea of the play. Yesterday, during Creative Dramatics we discussed what the play is. I told them we were going to Delta to perform, and I told them we would go to Delta a couple of Fridays from now to work at Delta and do the things like lighting at Delta. Connie at Delta said she'd help me with costumes, and Terri, last night, said she'd help me with lights. Kathy Lusk, is really interested in crafts, and I told her she would be in charge of props. Rosemary, who we had a staffing on today, will be in charge of costumes. She's really psyched out because she is going to be working in costumes with Connie. I'm going to bring her and try to get her into making "Dames at Sea" costumes. She's really excited about that. Stanley is so excited about being Fatso, that it's hard to get him down, he's so high. A funny thing about Stanley, he came to see me direct Cynthia, the TV

person, and Jim, the stage person during the "Lark," and he heard us yelling at them to be louder. Since then, everything that Stanley does is so loud--everything--and that's good, I'm glad he's being loud, because no one's going to hear him otherwise. Stanley is finally coming out of his shell so I think this may be the best thing for him. Going back to thinking about what would be the best thing, and who would benefit the most, I decided that they all could benefit somehow, so it's just a matter of picking those who I think would be best in the show--who can depict my show the best, since it is the time. A funny thing about this show--anybody can be used in it if you're just using it as a therapeutic process, because I've been using everybody all along now. It's just now starting in the middle of April that I'll have to start getting down to basics and using the people that will benefit me and the show the best--to just show the play off. Because it doesn't have to be performance level. At this point, being performance level means getting at the point where you can see that it is working, so I have to use people who will work the best. Stanley has come such a long way--I didn't think he'd be able to do Fatso--and now I see he can. So it can work with anybody, just in this premise alone. Worrying about who is going to benefit and who is not going to benefit is really a minor point because everyone will benefit from this in some way. Yesterday, going back to the creative dramatics class, we did some improvs. I scared the hell out of some of them because we did some improvs that were really heavy. I really went into

it and they thought I meant it. I explained to them that we were just improvising which meant that we were faking--we were playing. Then I explained to them what it means to be a cast and what it means to be a crew. Then we went to the singing part and we finally learned yesterday "I Like You" and they really get off on that because they sing--they call that the "love song"--and they like the idea of a love song. So we are at the point where they are reaching the idea of the play--the chorus members--they're all learning the parts as chorus members. When I get to the point where I have to pick a cast, I will pick a cast that will be used as a cast all the time. Today I took them for a little walk just to build trust. Then we came back and we went through all the songs--we shot right through them. I see John Ezell, from the old group, and James G. Howard and Stanley Hoffman as definites in the play. I'm still trying to find out parts. We learned something else in the "La, La" song. We did this one thing where Stanley would sing "You can sing la . . . you can sing" and we developed that--and it really works well.

Tomorrow is Thursday, March 31

Before I go to April 1, the Friday thing where I'm going to tape it, tomorrow night I'm going to pick a cast. I'm going to pick 15 people, and out of those 15, 12 are definitely going to be used. I'm going to take those 15, and on Friday, I'm going to put them all together in one section, in the front and the rest of them are going to be around them. They're the ones I'm going to use to do the

rehearsal on Friday. And then next week, they have their Easter vacation (the first full week of April). That's the week I'm going to be writing down the songs and sending for copyrights. That week is really important because I can see them this week, right now, I can see them thinking about it, getting into the idea of doing the play. They're really psyched about it and that makes me glad. It just depends on when I'm going to be able to do it and what's going to happen. The people involved are also psyched about it and that's a good sign. The first thing that I'm going to do Friday is put all the cast members that I'm going to pick tomorrow night together. They will sing the bulk of the music and I'll see how they do. From those fifteen, next week I will pick the twelve. But it has to be fifteen people that can really do it and from those fifteen I will pick the twelve. They won't know. They'll just know that they are interested. They will be told that they are allowed to perform the night that we do the show, but they won't be in the show, itself. I don't think they will be too upset because they'll be the slower functioning people, so the fact that they will be able to perform, will get them going.

March 31

Joe, who is supposedly my stage manager, suggested that for the set that I use a gym setting--like a basketball gym. That's something to note. In my creative dramatics class we first did "Let's talk, let's talk" and then I had four records; I used Archie and the Mehita

bell, "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," "Hair" and the "Overture to Candide." And I let them listen to this and we talked about contrasts, and different types of theatre (things like scenes, staging and a lot of other things).

Friday, April 1, can be connected with this. I didn't get a chance to let them hear "Archie and the Mehita bell," but I went through all the musicals with everybody. I explained to them that our show opens the same way that these shows open and close. We did today, April 1, before they have their vacation next week, we went through all the choral numbers. I didn't have to coax as much and it's working. I still see Stanley as Fatso and I'm stuck on a Dumpsy. We learned also, songs like "World is a Circle," "Thumbelina," "Happiness," and "Sing, Sing a Song." These songs work well because they drew the "Thumbelina" on their thumbs and it just worked really well.

The week of April 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th, we discussed some of the things we were going to do--we had staff meetings that week. We didn't do much for my play. I found out a couple of bookings and things like that. I did do objectives and plans for each student, which was a good thing to do.

The week of the 11th of April

The 11th we learned a new song with the students. I wrote a song called "The James H. Howard Blues," which had nothing to do with the play--it was just off the wall. James H. Howard is a person who

is diagnosed as a mute, but he can sing and we're teaching him a song called "The James H. Howard Blues" and he really loves it--it's working well. Then the 14th (Thursday) I had all the students and we went through all the numbers and we went through "The James H. Howard Blues." I also explained to them who the cast would be, what the cast would have to do and how they were going to be a class of mine for 2 hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday I have Stanley and I'm going to be teaching him the Fatso part so I'm going to be pretty close to him. The rest of them, I'll have on Tuesday and Thursday from 1:00-3:00. The thing about the cast is that it's very flexible. I have the first six members and I also double-cast Guest 1, who sings "La, La, La." I think that's all I'll double-cast, but all the parts can be double-cast and they'll all know all the songs, so there won't be any trouble if something happens and a cast member can't make it or we lose a cast member (God forbid). Alice listened to the students sing on Thursday and she said everything was down. A very bad problem: I think the key to this whole thing is timing--I've got to time it so the students build all the time. We can't do the same thing over and over again, for a long time because the students lose interest and when they lose interest, they go down. When everything goes down it's hard to get it up again. So the whole key is in the timing--don't peak too fast, and when you peak, you've got to peak at the right moment--preferably opening night in front of an audience. When you peak in front of an audience, and every audience

is different, so it won't matter and the beauty will be peaking in front of each audience and having a different audience see you do what you do.

April 17, Sunday

I thought of an ending for the show. After the "I Like You" song, Fatso comes to center stage and asks the audience "Who am I? I am me. Do you like, what you see?" (sung) Then he turns and sees a mirror on stage-left. I'm not sure how that's going to be with the mirror--if it will be a real mirror or mirror image. He looks at himself in the mirror, and he sings: "What am I? I am me. Do I like, what I see?" (sung) "Who am I? I am me. Yes, I like what I see." And there's a sort of a ballet which is about 32 bars. We go into the A7, and you hear the cast members calling him back to the party, because he's already come out, and with each gesturing "come" while miming the key to his or her own song. For example, someone will say "Fatso!" (sung) and be on her tippy-toes; or someone will say "Fatso!" and show the left hand-right hand. So each one is doing a symbol of what he learned from Fatso. So he sees and sings "So I am fat. So I am fat. So what? Why not? It's me they like. Oh Lord. Why me? Thank you." Then he goes over and asks the guests, "What do you want?" and one guest says "Do you want a piece of cake?", another one says "Do you want a piece of candy? . . . Do you want some ice cream, some soda?" and then another guest says "Do you want to sing?" And he takes Fatso by the hand and starts the finale--"Everything is happy now.

Everything is cheery now. Everything is joyful now. When we sing together." So I thought that would have more of an impact on the show if we actually did the ending number. The show is going to have to open the second week of June which gives me exactly two months. The basis of everything has got to be in the planning. I'll have to take Stanley, by himself Monday and Wednesday and the rest of the cast, Tuesday and then the next week Tuesday and Thursday, the rest of the class. I'm going to have to start on the improvisations of each scene. I think the ending will work with Fatso saying all that stuff to himself, because we're going to get into the essence of musical comedy, that there is an ending and that there is a semi-moral--not really a moral, but a semi-moral, quasi-moral and I think that will work.

April 18, Monday

I went over the "La, La, La," song with John and Stanley trying to teach them. The only problem is that John was with the rest of the group before and he sang "Yea, he's gonna shine!" (I sang the part "Now I'm gonna shine!") I wanted him to sing "Yea, he's gonna shine!" only on one note. That was the only problem on April 18 with John and Stanley learning this song.

April 19, Tuesday

The first time I had the cast, as a cast, without Cindy, was today. I had ten people in the group. Two didn't show. Pam was sick

and Cindy didn't show. I think Cindy is going to be cut and there will be only 11 people. I had planned to do "Let's Talk" and "Feelings," but I didn't do that at all. I went over a synopsis of the play and we were going to do some improvs. What I did was that I talked to the cast as if they were any normal cast, as I would have as their director. I told them that there were four things that were really, really important.

1) Worry about your own part. Don't worry about anyone else's part but yours. You're important and your part is important. Worry about your own part.

2) Have fun. Have a good time on stage. You're there to have fun. That's part of it--having fun with it.

3) You are adults, I told them, and I'm going to treat you like adults. If I get mad, don't be upset about it, and don't take it personally, because I get mad at everybody. When I get mad, it's not really important. It's important at the time, because I get excited about the part and I get excited about the play, and you're important and I'm important and I want you to look the best you can. I'm working with you, so I'll get mad at certain things.

4) The worse thing you can do is to do nothing. I explained to them that if you stand on stage and do nothing, that's probably the worse thing you could do including picking your nose. Even picking your nose, you're doing something. The stage is for acting, not to be just standing there doing nothing.

The four things are: worry about your own part; have fun; I'm going to treat you like adults; and the worse thing you can do, is to do nothing. Then we talked about the opening of the play, and I discussed the set--exactly what the set should be--and I told them it was a living room, and the cast suggested these props: a lamp, TV, curtains, couch, knick-knacks, fireplace, stereo, coffee table, rug, mirror (the mirror was my idea, because I want to use it for the show), end tables, and a plant. I told them it was a party and they decided they should have some punch, some cake, some cookies, potato chips, bean dip (which was crazy) crackers and cheese, napkins and cups, silverware, and anything that you'd need for eating utensils at a party, and somebody thought of Kentucky Fried Chicken. All these things were part of the set and it was really a good idea because they started discussing the set as a set and it was their set, and they decided what they wanted on it. I talked to them about the opening of the play. Then I went through the entire play, part by part, explaining to them that each song was the end of a scene, and each improvisation was a scene, and that they were all these scenes and the only thing that was set was the opening number and the finale. That has to be like that all the time. Things that happen in-between are immaterial and irrelevant. Anybody could do it and I could add a song anytime I want. Then I discussed the moral of the play. I explained the play. I went through the play, and explained the moral of the play. Then I asked them questions about the show. I explained

to them that people hated Fatso and they made fun of him and all of a sudden, since he did all these things for them, they loved him and they wanted him back in the party. But he had to prove himself. He had this obvious fatness, this obvious handicap, but everyone else had their own handicap and he helped them, and we see that he can help others. Others begin to like him for what he can do, and not the way he looked. A big surprise was Kathy Young, the girl who has problems communicating, when she was asked about the play, what the play was about, she just blurted out the entire plot in about 5 sentences, which was remarkable. I found problems with attention and memory. I think I'm going to have problems in this area with Brian, Pam and Billy. The most problem will be with Dorothy. I'm going to work with her, but it's going to be a problem. This is Tuesday the 19th and it's the first time I had the cast together as a class. I asked them what the show was about and then I asked them questions about the show. They told me what they think the show should be, and what it is about. I decided on a sort of a class structure for the cast class, the Creative Dramatics part. There are two hours, the creative dramatics part and the singing part. I started out with the creative dramatics part and the first five minutes of the drama class, I go through the summary of the play and ask them questions about the play so that they become totally familiar with the plot and with the play itself. Another thing I did on Tuesday, the 19th, was to discuss understudies. I found out that

I could use understudies from the crew for the chorus, and understudies from the part of the chorus for the leads. I thought maybe Dennis would be an understudy for Stanley.

April 20, Wednesday

We didn't do anything that had to do with the play. We went through "The James H. Howard Blues," we went through some Godspell things because we're taking the class to see the movie "Godspell." So nothing was done with the play.

April 21, Thursday

Left for Los Angeles with a group of students.

April 22, Friday

Went to Disneyland.

April 24, Sunday

We did a performance at 9:00 at the Very Special Arts Festival at Anaheim in Orange County. James, John, Stanley and Barbara were there. It was important that they get through stage fright. I think we got James through his stage fright--he was having the biggest problem with stage fright. Stanley, John and Barbara did well. They are going to be good for the show.

April 25

John and Stanley went through their song "La, La, La." I think they had too much party, but we went through it anyway. They

were hard to get together, but they finally got it together, and they did the whole song really well. They did it from "Try this . . ." to the end. They did not do the improv at the beginning. Again I reiterate that the timing is of essence. The whole thing is in the timing--trying not to make them peak too fast, and trying to keep them interested. That's a hard line to take because when you are trying to keep them interested, you have got to keep them doing new things. When you keep them doing new things, you may peak them too fast. So the idea is to bring them down. At this moment, I'm bringing Stanley pretty far down and I think it's a good move because Stanley is going to be the super-star of the show--he has to do all of the songs--the lower he goes, the farther he has to go, and it's better to have him go all the way up and realize that he does have problems, than to be the super-star through the whole thing, and realize that he is the super-star, but he isn't that great. So while building up his self-confidence, I still have to build up his appropriate responses; his appropriate affect to the problems at hand. He's got to learn that even though he's got self-confidence, he's got to have self-confidence because he knows he's doing a good job. I really didn't have any big problems with John and I think the trip was really, really, really a good thing. (Really?) We got closer to each other and they are listening to me now--listening better. I think it was a good deal. At this point the students are very, very excited about doing the play and I can see by the way they want to do it and they want to rehearse,

and do well. I explained to them that it will be them that will be on stage and not me, and that it is important that they work really hard. Through their hard work, they will accomplish a good play. We will be touring the play in July and probably August. Right now I'm still working on the opening in June. If that works, then it will be fine. I've got to work faster--the hard part of this thing is working fast at this point, keeping them interested, and still keeping the timing and not letting them peak too fast. I try to always make something different and extra everytime they do it. I have to talk to Stanley, and it's important I talk to Barbara, John, Billy, James, Pam, and Brian and make them understand that the parts that they play are really important. They have to get more action into them. I think I'll start on Tuesday, the 26th (April) with the idea that the six people who have a lot of lines are really important, and that Stanley is really important and I have to count on them. When they start understanding that, I don't know if it will be the ideal thing, but it will be on its way. So if I explain to Stanley and Barbara and James and John that the most important thing for them to do is to worry about themselves, to keep it together, and to understand that the whole thing is based on what they do, they may understand and work harder. Because there is the four Guests, and Dumpsy and Fatso, that's six parts, and they're the most important parts--if they screw up then everything will be screwed up. So I have to tell them that I have to count on them, and how important they are.

April 26, Tuesday

I decided on a cast: James Howard, Billy Ray Smith, John Ezell, Stanley Hoffman, Dennis Kroon, Barbara Beckwith, Brian Mohler, Carol Anne Schroeder, Dorothy Parker, and Kathy Young. The reason I cut Pam is that she hasn't been to two of the rehearsals and I can't do it without her. The song that she was supposed to sing, "Tippy-Toe Tango," I'm giving to Barbara. Carol Anne Schroeder will now be Dumpsy, Barbara will be the "Tippy-Toe Tango" tentatively (those two may be changed if Barbara doesn't grow up). James G. Howard will sing the "Tick-Tock" and Billy Ray Smith will sing "Right Hand, Left Hand." Our big problem with Billy Smith is that he can't remember from one second to the next. I found that out on Wednesday when I started teaching him the song with Stanley, (April 27th). He has a big problem trying to remember "This is my right hand, this is my left . . ." He doesn't know the difference between left and right, first of all, and secondly, he doesn't understand using right, meaning right hand, and using right, as opposed to wrong, meaning correct. So it took an hour and a half of that and he still doesn't have the lyrics down. We may teach him the lyrics by rote. I don't know what to do, but I'm working on it. John Ezell definitely has "Only One Note." Stanley definitely has Fatso. Dennis Kroon is in the chorus--I may change Dennis with Billy if things don't work out. Barbara and Carol Anne, they're the problems right there (they may work out). Brian's definitely in the chorus as well as Dorothy and Kathy Young. So I have a

ten member cast; the six are principles, four are in the chorus. I explained to them again that they should 1) worry about their own part, and no one elses, 2) have fun, 3) I treat them like adults and I expect them to act like adults, and 4) the worse thing that anyone can do on stage is not to do anything. I went over the plot again and asked them questions about the plot. Then I decided that I would block the opening and I blocked it this way:

There's opening music, which is the Fatso Theme; Kathy and Dennis come on first from opposite sides of the stage. They come in and sit on opposite sides of the couch--avoiding each other. Brian and Dorothy come in. Brian leans up--left. Dorothy sits on a chair on stage-right. (I have two chairs and the couch in the center.) Then James and John come on--James goes and sits on a chair stage-left and John stands up stage-right. Then I have Barbara and Billy Ray--Billy stands behind the couch, sort of avoiding people, and Barbara goes up stage-left behind James and a little ways from Brian. The cast will sort of play this scene ignoring each other through it, and eventually Fatso will come on, but right at the first point everyone will be ignoring each other. That scene will be played--Fatso will enter stage-right, walk across the stage (as he walks across the stage, people are laughing) goes around James stage-left, goes past Brian and Barbara and starts singing, everybody starts singing "Who Are You?" At that point James goes to the couch and sits in the center. They sing the first two verses of "Who Are You?" and Fatso walks down-stage, left, sings

it to James and Kathy. Then he comes front and around during the little musical interlude and moves stage-right and comes between John and Dorothy and Dennis and Billy, and asks Dennis and Billy who they are and they say their names--there's a musical interlude--then Fatso crosses behind John and Dorothy and comes stage-right of them and asks "Who Are You?", then Fatso finds out, walks to center stage and sings his song, stays in center stage until the end of the reprise of "Who Are You?"

April 27, Wednesday

We went over Billy and Stanley's song--"The Right Hand." That's all we did for two hours.

April 28

The Special Olympics--nothing was done.

April 29, Friday

We are taking the students to see the movie version of "Godspell" and all week we've been doing some numbers from "Godspell" so that they can be familiar with it. We want to give them a taste of the musical, because we can't take them to see a musical because there is none around. So we are going to give them a taste of the musical--to show them how music goes with lyrics, goes with book, goes with etc. and let them get that.

Two situations happened Friday. When we came back from the movie we went over a couple of things from the play. We went over

"Tippy-Toe Tango" and everyone learned it, to a certain extent, with the lyrics. I tried to teach Billy his song--"The Right Hand"--and he is such a problem, he can't remember from one minute to another. A suggestion that Alice made was to give him the lyrics and let him learn that, and let him do a little bit at a time, instead of bombarding him with everything at once. I may have been doing that--I may have been bombarding him. Then another situation came up; a couple of weeks ago I scratched Pam, but she wants to be back. She was supposed to sing "Tippy-Toe Tango," but for her problem, I can't just let her come back as easily as she left. So she will be back as a chorus member and not singing "Tippy-Toe Tango." Barbara will sing "Tango" and Carol Anne Schroeder will be Dumpsy. So the "Tippy-Toe Tango" will be done by Barbara, and I told Pam that she has to be good and she can't be messing around like she's been doing.

May 2, Monday

I taught Stanley and James the "Tick-Tock" song. I also explained another thing about reading script and doing theatre with them. It's important that they don't say the things that are in parentheses. Those things that are in parentheses are to be done and not said. I think they realize that now. Then we did "Why Am I Fat?" Stanley did that--he has the lyrics. Everyone has lyrics now.

May 3, Tuesday

Today I will give out lyric sheets for the chorus members.

They are responsible for their own lyric sheets because I will not give out any more. We will start going over songs with the people who are to be singing the songs. The first hour we will be doing blocking. The scheduling will be something like this: On Monday and Wednesday we will be doing some singles; picking people out. Tuesday and Thursday for an hour and 15 minutes we will be doing blocking of the scenes, as a scene and adding improvs in it. I will block the opening--we will run over the opening for the first 10 minutes every day we rehearse. After we run over the opening with "Who Are You?", we will start doing the improvisations with single people. Then we will do the songs later, until we start getting into it--after about two weeks we will start doing the songs within the play itself. I'm supposed to introduce one or two of the songs Friday at the Fashion Show (May 6) but I'm having second thoughts about doing that because I don't want it ever shown until they feel totally confident with it. They will decide whether they will be doing it Friday.

May 4, Wednesday

We learned some songs. I used my music class this day as a sort of regular music class--I didn't do anything from the play per se. We went over a couple of the tunes but I kept it really light and said we would do it on Thursday, at 1:00. They're getting really interested in it. On Tuesday, during the rehearsal, it got really rough. I was really anxious so we went through the whole thing. I said to them, whoever wants to drop out should drop out now. No one did. Barbara

gave me a problem, she was humming and hawing, being her regular baby, but I straightened that out. I decided on Friday not to have Pam in the play because she's not worth the hassle.

May 5, Thursday

This was a real good day. We blocked the first, went through the opening, (went over really well) and I blocked and ran through the first improv with John and Stanley--the "Only One Note" so we're all the way up to "Only One Note," but I haven't blocked the rest of the cast. But it's going really, really well. I have to do some scheduling; I had a meeting Wednesday, May 4, with the rest of the staff and explained to them what everyone has to do. Alan is going to do the lighting, Joel is going to do the set design and the logo for the program, Roxanne and Sue Anne are going to do program, photography, and things like doing the costumes. Sue Anne already has an idea for the costumes; she came up with that Sunday, May 8.

On Thursday, when I went through everything, everything turned out well. They are looking at each other, they're getting more confidence.

May 6, Friday

We decided not to do scenes from the play. On the 7th I got the students tickets to see "Dame At Sea" and told all the cast to go. Most of the cast went except for John Ezell who had to go to church. Some came from really far away--some even paid their way because they

forgot their ticket. It was really interesting that all of them did go--that they were really anxious to go. This week on Wednesday I got the final notice that the show will open June 17th at Delta College. Still the essence of this whole thing is timing. After the meeting I went through the entire script with the rest of the staff and I explained to them what I am doing so that they understand exactly where I am at. They understand the show. The show has many levels. I explained to Joel that I want the logo to be on the one level of the party, but I want the other levels to show through. I think he's getting the idea. Everybody is really excited, and the timing has been perfect so far. We have got six weeks before the show opens and we have enough time to get that show really, really well done. I decided today that maybe I should have a bass player and a drummer, the two piano players, and a flute player. I think that would be a really good group with the bass and the drums. I may write out the scores too. I'm ready. I figure this week, the 9th through the 13th, I will have, on Monday and Wednesday, my students do what they have to do with singles, and do some "Godspell" numbers. On Tuesday and Thursday we will do the blocking. Alice is going to do the songs "Tippy-Toe Tango" and "Right Hand, Left Hand" (Billy's song) and we'll see what happens with that. I keep on talking of timing as if it was of the essence; and timing <u>is</u> of the essence, it is very, very, very, very important. The timing of when you tell the staff, the timing of when you tell the students, the timing when you get everybody else involved, and it's working out the

way it should, because everybody is getting involved and it's going to take the six weeks that we have left to do what they have to do. I figured by the beginning of June, which is only three weeks away, June 2 (Thursday) and June 1, we will start doing it before audiences and we will do it for the next week. On June 15 (Wednesday) we will have the dress rehearsal at Delta, on the 16th, we will open for schools, and the 17th, which will be at night, will be the big opening.

May 9, Monday

We decided today to invite a guest audience. Our students will be in the first three rows and the guest audience will be behind that to the back in the middle section of the theatre ($4.00) and the rest of the seats will be $3.00. A couple of things I want to bring out: I told Alice that she was going to have to teach Brian, Kathy, Dennis and Dorothy to sing on key for "My Name is . . ." When I did the improvisations, I went through the suggestions on the script and then I made them decide what they wanted to do. We'll find out tomorrow if they will remember what they decided to do. I found out today that during the class they did remember. We did not do anything of Fatso today with the students. We decided to set the classes up so that I would have the cast Monday through Thursday, all the time. Alice will also have them so that she can teach them choreography.

May 10, Tuesday

Overture (with pianos) and first scene including "Who Are You?", "Why Am I Fat?", "Fatso" reprise, John and Stanley with "Only One Note," (from the beginning through the first scene and the end of "Only One Note," recorded with music and small audience).

May 12, Thursday

We went through the rehearsal of the play with an audience composed of the rest of the classes and they watched the show and I explained to the other classes what I was doing and how it was done. I also explained things like why I was yelling at the cast.

May 13, Friday

We took all the students to tour Delta. Every other Friday from now until the play opens the cast and crew will go to Delta. The crew will learn how to be a crew and the cast will learn more about what goes into being a cast, the group that they are supposed to be. We took some shots Friday around the Delta stage (photos). Right now we're in the process of doing publicity and things like that.

May 16, Monday

On Thursday we discussed things like concepts of the play. Stanley had a lot of trouble with the concepts. I think I'm going to take him on a one-on-one basis and teach him some concepts--what the play means, what his character means, what every other character means. We're still bogged down with "everybody hates parties" and the various

reasons everybody hates parties (everybody has their own reason). For example one can't sing, one can't dance. I think the problem with Stanley is that he has to remember so many things and we have brought him down enough now (he was really flying high because he was "big star"), to start building him back up. We had discussions about this--reinforcements, etc. This morning Alice started to complete the choreography in songs like "Tippy-Toe Tango." "I Like You" and Billy's song, "Right Hand, Left Hand" still have to be choreographed and we'll get on that soon. I said I wasn't going to rehearse the songs without the choreography, but I decided to rehearse them without choreography this afternoon because I figured that trying to overload the circuit with too many things at one time may be dangerous, so I'll try to keep it down to one thing at a time and clean up the songs because they have already had to do them with a lot of different things. Now they will just have to do the songs and we'll see if that has a psychological effect on them. All they had to do is sit and sing the songs. Then we'll really clean them up. I think I'll start doing that on Mondays and Wednesdays, and then Monday morning and Wednesday morning, Alice will be doing the choreography, and I guess some on Tuesday morning. Tuesday and Thursday afternoons we'll be cleaning up the whole thing--doing it as a play.

May 17, Tuesday

Today we began to realize that time is of the essence--timing is very important. We went through the opening scene and we did

Guest 1 scene, which is now pretty well set--it's really good. We got the people off-stage and we're going to do the next scene with James and Stanley alone. That ought to do it.

May 18, Wednesday

Today we did the end of John and Stanley's scene (La, la scene) and went into James' and Stanley's "I can't tell time scene." Earlier this morning we did the scene with Barbara and Stanley--and "Tippy-Toe Tango." I found something out that I have been doing. I have been taking the part of Stanley and trying to explain to the other characters what they do like "What's your problem?" and they all say "I hate parties." "Why do you hate parties?" "Because I can't sing," or "I can't tell time." "Why do you have to tell time at a party?" "I have to tell time at a party because my father said to get the car home at 10:00 and I don't know when it's 10:00," etc. And then I realized that I was playing Stanley's part, and he had no chance to react to somebody else. Jim Delesandro was there and he started being the other part and he reacted to Stanley's talking and he initiated Stanley's talking, so we got a different perspective--and it was a very good perspective. Stanley saw something that he hadn't seen before and it was really good that way. We are going to do that from now on--we're going to take both sides and let the actor experience both sides of the character--I'll be Stanley when I'm talking to James etc., and Jim will be the other people talking to Stanley, or I'll be the other people talking to Stanley, and that will be done later. I found that out today.

May 19, Thursday

We ran through the show from the beginning in the afternoon. Alice and the class did Barbara and Stanley's scene in the morning and it seems like we're having problems with the improvisations. The songs are coming--they're doing well, the songs are doing better than the improvs. We did the opening and the first scene and we ran right into the scene with James and Stanley and we got bogged down in this scene. What I found out is that more and more, they get it better if someone else is doing it with them, instead of doing an improv between the two student characters--it works better to have somebody to do it with them; like Jim doing it with James; me doing it with James; then Stanley doing it with James. Or Jim doing it with Stanley; me doing it with Stanley; and then Stanley doing it with James. So the brainstorm (or drizzle) I came up with for tomorrow, May 20, is that in the morning we should do it as the whole school, the entire enrollment, doing the scenes with different people. I will give the preliminaries like "What's your problem?" and they will do the scene with Stanley or they will do the scene with me or with Alice, things like that. That way we'll get everybody involved and they'll get to know the play better, and maybe they'll enjoy it better when they finally see it.

May 20, Friday

We did do all that and it was really a successful morning and we all did the different scenes and I think we got a better grasp of the play--those that are in it and those that aren't in it as well.

The plans for the next week are to learn the rest of the songs and to put the whole play together. Friday was a good thing because those that aren't in the play got a taste of it and those that are in the play were shown that others can do it, also they were able to listen to things that were already done, like Stanley and James seeing somebody else doing their scene--they can sit back and see it being done. As I said before, timing is really of the essence--it's really important, just as patience is important, and having realistic goals. Realism is very important. I've still got to remember that it's not going to be as perfect as I'd like to see it, and this week will be a week of getting things done--getting scenes done, getting songs learned, doing it and being able to run through it Thursday afternoon and Friday at Delta.

May 27, Friday

This was the first time the students did the show on the Delta stage. It was a disaster of course. But they saw how it will be to be on stage. They did very well adjusting to the chorus numbers. On Monday the 30th, and Tuesday the 31st, there were no real run-throughs, all we did was to rehearse scenes and put things together. Billy Ray Smith was a big problem. Billy can't remember anything because he doesn't listen--Billy has a problem with listening. If you tell him something, he can repeat it, but he's not listening to what you're saying--he's just repeating. The simple questions he can't answer. We figured out maybe he's afraid that somehow, someone is

trying to trick him, but Monday he went through the song and he got it, and Tuesday we decided that at the end of the song Stanley would help him. Billy gets bogged down repeating the same things over and over again. He can't adjust--he can't go back to the beginning and continue--he just gets bogged down in the repetition.

June 1, Wednesday

Today was the first time James Howard and Stanley did their scene and song and we staged it, and in 20 minutes they were able to do their whole scene and song without a mistake. It was unbelievable. I explained to Stanley today that it's not the fact that you don't understand, as you learn, you can learn more. For example, he had so much trouble with John's scene four weeks ago, and with James' scene, he could do it in 20 minutes. I explained to both of them that you learn to learn--and that's what this is--learning to learn, accentuating the fact that our memory is better, our (our?) attention span is better. Last week, I gave two different kinds of talks and speeches. Two weeks ago I talked about what it means to be handicapped (beginning of last week). None of the students really believe that they are handicapped, and I explained to them that Mark Twain said that "We are only handicapped with what we think we cannot do." Last week, after we ran through the play once towards the end of the week, we got everything done but blocking the final song. We have the final song to block and we're done. I explained to them that now is the time to think about the play as a whole, and they did. We

were discussing what the play means, about the character and what the show means to them as people, and what the show is teaching them and what the show is teaching the audience. I explained to them that a lot of people are afraid, self-conscious about what they have--what their problems are. I gave the example of having a big nose. You should say, yea, I have a big nose, but it's all mine, all of it. And they understood that--they started to get into the show more--what to feel at the beginning--what to feel in the middle--what to feel at the end, and the whole mood of the show is enhanced. If this character, Fatso, who has this outward problem, this handicap of being fat, can he overcome this handicap as he says "Who am I? I am Me. Do I like what I see?" What's more important, whether you like what you see, or if I like what I see in you. Because as soon as you look at yourself and you say, well, this is me, take me or leave me, and you accept yourself as Fatso does, everyone else will accept you too. Sure, if you keep on sulking about the problem that you have, no one else will be able to oversee that problem that you have, because you won't allow them to see the real you--all you allow them to see is that "fat," which is your handicap. Fatso's handicap physically is obvious. Everyone else is handicapped with a more subtle handicap. Not being able to sing doesn't mean much to Fatso, ("big deal, you can't sing--but I'm FAT!") but it means a lot to that one character. That was one thing we discussed--what that level meant. I see, many levels to this show. The first level that I see is a party--a very

base level--the storyline, what the show is. People like him, people don't like him, people like him because he helps and everybody likes him at the end. Then there's a level which deals with normal people--people who are handicapped with what they think they cannot do. That's really the mood for the whole show. When I heard that phrase, by Mark Twain, that really set the mood for the show--what we think we cannot do. Because Fatso thinks that no one loves him and no one likes him and he can't do anything, until he starts building up his confidence by helping other people. Fatso helps other people have confidence in themselves, and as a result, he gets confidence in himself. He learns about himself through what others see in him after he teaches them things. The play is designed in such a way that the beginning sets a mood and the end sets another mood. The moods are almost the same in the eyes of Fatso. He's still complaining about being fat. At the beginning he's complaining about being fat, and he's worried about it--upset about it. At the end, he's still upset about it, but he accepts it, and that's the whole thing--accepting it. He helps John to accept the fact that he can't sing, but he helps him use the fact that he can sing on one note. He helps James accept the fact that he can't tell time, but he helps him to tell when it's ten o'clock. He helps Barbara accept the fact that she can't dance, but he helps her dance a dance that she can do--"Tippy-Toe Tango." He helps Billy accept the fact that he can't tell his right hand from his left, but to be grateful for the fact that he has two hands. Then he sees Dumpsy and

he realizes that there are other people that have outward problems. The only time he gets the realization that everyone else has a problem besides him is after he sees Dumpsy. Then he gets this realization of "I can have friends." Friends don't like me because I'm skinny or because I'm fat, friends are liking me because I'm me, because of what I'm doing. Dumpsy likes him because he's fat, first of all, but she sees something else--it gets a little deep towards the end--but she sees something else. I have this vision of this play expanding where there are 23 or 24 (!!!) songs like the La, la, la song, the Right Hand song, the Time song, and the Tippy-Toe Tango song. Everything else stays the same--the "I Like You" stays the same with a different Dumpsy and a different Fatso, the opening and the ending stay the same. This means that interchangeable things can happen at the party--different people can play different parts, and songs can be dropped out, songs can be plopped in. Every scene starts out with "Hi" and each ends with a song. Each scene is "Hi, what's your problem?" "I hate parties." "Why do you hate parties?" "Because . . ." "Well, maybe I can help you." Fatso never teaches anybody how to do something--he never teaches John how to sing on different notes, but he gives him a song to make use of what John can do. I use a lot of the aspects of the person in the role. Instead of typing--molding my people to the parts, I mold the parts to the people. Anyone can sing those songs, but molding that part to the person, and the person becoming the part becoming the person

becoming the part, makes it easier for them to grasp it and take what they have and put it in it. It's a sort of acting out some of the things that they are, their problems, acting them out within the scene. I think they can stand back and look at themselves on stage as other people are looking at them, but I don't think that they are ever, ever going to completely understand what it's doing, or what it's trying to teach. If they just get the first two levels--the surface levels--of him helping people and the fact that he's fat, but he accepts the fact that he's fat. If they can get those surface levels, they're going to make it. At the end of the show I decided that we'd take the first two rows of Center students, and after the show was over, after the curtain call, and we'd sing "Everything is Happy Now" and the whole Center would stand up and start singing it and take off to the back of the theatre as the logo is flashed on the stage. A lot of flash. We talked about a set design, surrealism, five units plus a table using the psych, using a lot of color, using back lighting, using front lighting, shadows, silhouettes, things like that which will enhance the whole mood of the play. I'm just worried about one thing--if the overshadowing of the fact that they are retarded has any bearing on what people see in the show. But the levels seem to be clear. Things have happened. Billy Smith, over the past week and a half, I have been really drilling him over and over and over again on his song. It's a real problem. James was a problem, but he's not anymore. The smile on his face today was priceless. The

sense of accomplishment when it is done is worth it. I go through some of the people and I see that the only thing that they have to grasp is the show. They have this solid thing to look forward to and grasp. James asked today after class, when are we going to tour--he's never asked that before. James used to have seizures which he brought on himself during the rehearsal period. I brought it up last week. I was going to let Brian do the part, because James was giving problems, so I let it up to James that whatever he decided to do went and Brian knew that. Brian said that whatever James decided was OK, but he'd be ready to do it. James came back the next day and said he wanted to do the part and I told him I'd stick with him until he did it right, but he couldn't have anymore seizures. If he had another seizure, Brian would do the part. He hasn't had a seizure since. Billy Ray--I considered not letting him do the song--but he has such a low self-image, low sense of accomplishment, that he has to do it, and I'll stick with him until he does it. James would have been able to cope with the fact that he couldn't do it and someone else had to do it because the pressure got too great, but Billy would never be able to live with that. He needs that sense of accomplishment, doing it and doing it right and finishing it--they all need that, they all need this thing of starting with something and finishing it. I don't think they have ever finished anything in their lives and that in itself is good for them. They've never been asked to do as much as I'm asking them to do. They've never been told to

do so much. They've never been expected to do so much. Sue Anne said something about them seeing me yelling at them and getting upset, but I'm always there everyday and I don't desert them, and I don't give up on them. Billy said the other day, that he loved me because I'm the first one that hadn't given up on him. And it's true, because it's hard to give up on them, how do you cope with something like that. Just that in itself is good for them. Brian's been much more talkative--speaking his mind, doing the choreography, remembering . . . it's amazing how much they remember. I didn't think they'd be able to remember and do a full hour and 10 minute show. I thought they'd forget something--it's amazing how they can remember everything. Someone like Dorothy who couldn't keep her mind on one thing--she had the attention span of a dead fly. Now she's doing songs and keeping her mind on this show through rehearsal periods that are unbelievable, 9:30-11:30 and from 1:00-3:00--rehearsing six hours a day is ridiculous, but they're doing it and they're keeping their minds on it. They're excited about it. They have something to talk about, something that's theirs. I explained to them that I wrote the play, but I gave it to them, it's their play, what they do with it is up to them. I told them a lot of things about being loud on stage--I explained to them that it is a good show--they have a good show, but if no one can hear it, it's not going to be worth it. The play gives me an excuse to yell and scream and get excited and it's a medium to hide behind. If I started to yell at them as me, I'd sound like an

ogre, but if I yell at them out of frustration, it's much better. I discovered another thing--my energy pitch has to be six times as great as theirs to keep them with me. If I keep everything low key, and don't yell, I get nothing done because they get lax and they start dropping off. There's no enthusiasm, and they don't think and they don't understand and they don't do anything. When my enthusiasm is up, and I am flipped out, so to speak, they flip out with me. They never get as high pitched as I am, but they get up to a performance level. I think I've drilled into Stanley and Barbara the fact that you have to talk out loud. Dennis Kroon is like an old woman. He's worried about everybody elses business except his own, and I think that what this play is doing for Dennis is bringing out his problems. Dennis looks like there is nothing wrong with him and he's together and all, and then you put him in something like this and you find out how retarded he really is--that he doesn't understand everything as opposed to someone like Brian, where you can see his problems overtly, but the play is giving him confidence to cope with the problems that he has, also. What this play is about is coping with the problems you have. The therapeutic aspects of the play, and the therapeutic suggestions that the play is putting forth are one and the same. Therapy seems to be, to me, not completely solving problems, but being able to cope with problems that you have. Things like eye contact, memory, and attention span, may never be perfect, e.g. to have a perfect memory is impossible, but the little memory that you have, if you use

it to the fullest, you will do very well. And the confidence that you get, that you can do something, and the confidence that you get to make you try, is important. If they don't get anything else out of this play, they know that when they started this venture, they weren't sure they could do it, and now they are doing it, because some force, like myself, pushed them and kept it going. What I'm doing--pushing, playing 'super ego' with them--saying they can do it, fighting them every inch of the way--is something they don't have. They don't have that super-person, that image within themselves to push them and say work at it, work at it, work at it, if you don't get it we'll do it tomorrow and we'll do it right and we'll push and we'll push, and that is me--what I'm doing--and that seems to me to be what a therapist is, to push this person--to be the part of them that they don't have. Through the play, I am supplying them with the parts that they don't have. Once they do the play, this part that they don't have will be closer to their grasp, they will see it more, they will start feeling that they can do it themselves, which is what every play does. After the director finishes the play, after the writer writes it and the director directs it, the actors think it's theirs. My actors have already been saying this is my song, they think it's theirs and they don't need me anymore as a writer or a director, which comes back to the whole therapeutic process; I am the part that they don't have, and then when they can do it themselves, they don't need me anymore. There's more to putting on a play--than just putting on a play. It's

a life process. It's taking things out of life--it's a piece of life and to them it's even more than a piece of life, it's a piece of them. They can feel it, touch it, see it, and it's them, it's part of them, it is them.

Life for me is a theatrical performance, a piece of drama. The drama of their life is much more complicated because they don't see it, they don't see the drama, they don't see their life being acted out before them. Acting is reacting, reacting to situations. I explained to them that the entire show is a chain reaction of cues. Everything is a reaction to something else that has happened. I taught them to apply all that they learned to their daily life dramas.

May 27, Friday	All day at Delta (all the students)
May 30, Monday	Off
May 31, Tuesday	Closed rehearsal all day
June 1, Wedn. day	Brown bag day, rehearsal in the afternoon
June 2, Thursday	Morning rehearsal closed, afternoon open
June 3, Friday	Press conference (a scene for camera)
June 6, Monday	Rehearsal with audience (theatre?)
June 7, Tuesday	Same
June 8, Wednesday	Same
June 9, Thursday	CLEAN-UP in morning Performance at San Joaquin Junior High for trainable mentally retarded 1:00 P.M.
June 10, Friday	All day at Delta Tech day
June 13, Monday	Perform for an audience (theatre?)
June 14, Tuesday	Same
June 15, Wednesday	DRESS REHEARSAL (invited audience)
June 16, Thursday	PERFORMANCE 3:30 P.M.
June 17, Friday	PERFORMANCE 8:00 P.M.

Chapter 5

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The effectiveness of the instrument and the method cannot be judged on a purely statistical basis, e.g. a pre-posttest design. The amount of individual growth and development of the individuals involved can only depict this. In addition, the secondary purpose of this thesis was to create a professional theatrical production, capable of developing skills and behaviors, and helping each student involved interact more effectively with his "least restrictive environment" (P.L. 94-142). The instrument-method model described in this thesis has been instrumental in the growth and development of 12 individuals.

Because the instrument is theatre, and the method is based on traditional and normalized theatrical production, replication of the model in other settings and with other groups also is possible. Since the instrument, according to original standards, is never modified, then the way to promote individual development is to modify the method to fit the needs of the individual and his/her individual education plan. By law, each exceptional individual must have an individualized education plan, which must be reviewed periodically.

Two evaluations, 7/7/77 and 1/31/78, of each student involved follows. Although subjective, they are required by law. The evaluations describe the individual's "overview," and treat the student with respect and dignity. When individual growth and development occurs, as seen in these evaluations, success can be claimed.

EVALUATIONS
(Stanley)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Stanley was enrolled in the music class. He always wanted to be the center of attention in every class and if he wasn't, he would withdraw into his little world and pout. Stanley's interactions with the rest of the class were negative. He would criticize others and say "I could do it better." When challenged, he would make excuses for his failures. Stanley would get nervous, withdraw and choke when he had to perform for an audience. Stanley was unsure of himself when speaking to others outside of the staff and students of the Center. Physically, he showed his nervousness by shaking constantly. He couldn't even hold a piece of paper still. Stanley was chosen for the lead role in "Fatso" on the basis of these needs, interest in performing and his musical talent. Stanley's overconfidence broke down when he was challenged with the controlling (leading) role. Because of the structure of the play and classes and because of the goal (performances at Delta) set up, he was able to accept failures and work on a mature level. He was also forced to work with others in an ensemble. The structure of the play made it possible to overchallenge Stanley while moderately challenging the others. Since the other students had less to learn, they caught on faster than Stanley. This was a complete turnaround. Stanley finally had to earn his "superstar" status. His shaking and hypertension decreased. A goal of handling the leading role was set for him and he met it on the night of the performance at Delta. Stanley is still looking for someone to "show him the way." He does not make his own goals. He does not trust his judgments. Everyday, without failure, he asks "What are we going to do today?" I will ask him, "what do you want to do?" He will say, "practice for the play." Nothing really definite but something already setup for him, the play. Since the performances, Stanley has gained confidence when speaking to others outside the Center. He acts maturely when taken to places outside the Center, i.e. recording studio.

Stanley (cont'd)

Date	Report
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 Stanley has performed "Fatso" seven times, attended class five days a week for two hours each day, and was also involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. During performance tours, rehearsal time before tour, recording sessions and rehearsals for specific dates, Stanley's shaking, hypertension, pouting and destructive criticisms decreased. Stanley does his best when a goal is setup for him. He needs to be told where he is going at all times. Stanley was the stage manager for the Center's Christmas show and has been assigned stage manager for the touring company of "Fatso." Stage Manager is a specific job and a responsibility and forces Stanley to make decisions on his own regarding production. He is expected to have things under control. He must trust his judgments. Stanley was told that a stage manager does not mean "boss" but an "aid" both to the director and the cast. A stage manager must take the blame for things that go wrong. This is a continuous job and is a step in the direction of vacations. Stanley stage managed the performances in Orange County 1/27-29/78 and the performance at Delta's Festivention 2/1/78.

Stanley's Statement:

I read Stanley his evaluation and asked him, "How did you change in the past six months." He said, "I think I've changed. I like what I am doing. I don't hit girls like I used to. I used to interrupt people who are talking but now I wait until they are done. I don't bother the teachers as much. I think I'm growin' up or something."

EVALUATIONS
(Barbara)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Barbara was enrolled in the creative drama class. It was very difficult to get Barbara to speak out or do anything. She would pout and make disturbing noises and criticize others, but would not do anything constructive. When Barbara was directly challenged, she would take it, but always start her task by saying, "I can't do it, I know I can't." Barbara was chosen for the cast of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs and her talents, i.e. good singing and speaking voice. During the rehearsals she gradually became more aware of her talents and began experimenting with them. She was not only able to handle one song and scene, but also the finale was hers. Her pouting and various attention-getting behaviors, e.g. crying, shouting, and criticisms decreased. Barbara handled herself very well on the nights of the performances at Delta College 6/16 and 6/17. Barbara will continue in the advanced theatre class with vocational opportunities stressed, dealing directly or indirectly with theatre.
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 Barbara has performed "Fatso" seven times, attended class five days a week for two hours each day, and was involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/ Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. Before a new project Barbara still says "This is not going to work." However, she takes chances instead of doing nothing. Barbara's attention-getting behavior, e.g. crying, shouting, and criticisms have decreased. She tends to take care of her problems herself instead of getting all the teachers and students involved. As well as performing the play Barbara will be involved in a student workshop dealing with creative dramatics and "Process Theatre." Barbara has been handling herself well on tour. She has taken care of herself without specific directions for every little task.

Barbara's Statement:

I read Barbara her evaluation and asked her, "How did you change in the past six months." She said, "I haven't been crying as much because I'm not a little kid anymore. When things don't go right at

Barbara (cont'd)

school and I get upset I've got to be on my own. I go into a corner and think about what I can do about it. Before I went out of the classroom and became mad and pouted."

EVALUATIONS
(John)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. John was enrolled in the music class. He has a difficult time keeping his mind on the class activities. John would look to the side, laugh and talk to himself. As a result his span of attention was short. John also had temper tantrums, and his excitement over food and parties was overdone. He would run around screaming and cursing when he was not allowed to do what he wanted. John also had this uncontrollable pacing anyplace, anytime, and anywhere. John was chosen for the cast of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs, his interest in performing and his musical talent. Within the play structure John was allowed to lose his temper and scream only when it was part of his character. Otherwise he was told to calm down or else he would be cut from the play. This worked because John loves the limelight. John's performance, concentration and control was outstanding the nights of the performances at Delta College. John's tantrums decreased. He also does not do anything but class work when in drama class.
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 John has performed "Fatso" seven times, attended class five days a week for two hours each day, and was involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/ Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. John has, for the most part, stopped his pacing. He can sit still in class, can follow instructions, i.e. temper only a few times, has been able to concentrate in class and discuss concepts of "Fatso" and theatre. John is now involved in a student workshop in creative dramatics and "Process Theatre." He is able to communicate with strangers without drifting off the subject. All of John's advancements must be reinforced because he is at the stage where he could regress very easily. On tour John has been able to take care of himself. Also on tour John has shown a healthier attitude toward food. He isn't obsessed with food to the point of not being able to do anything else.

John's Statement:

I read John his evaluation and asked him "How did you change in the past six months." He said, "I never throw temper tantrums. I never

John (cont'd)

throw chairs around. I never cuss, I never say dirty language. I never hit nobody. I used to start fights. I used to go in the refrigerator without asking the staff could I have something. I don't do that no more. I don't beg for people's lunches. I don't go in the drawing supplies without asking the teacher. I learned to come to class on time. After school I draw. I stopped pacing and I wasn't until I do the play, when I say "I hate parties." I stopped picking on my friends and I make-up with my friends by saying, "I'm sorry." I used to fight on the bus. I learn to act normal."

EVALUATIONS
(Billy)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Billy was enrolled in the music class activities. Billy's weakest area is his memory. When asked any questions, he would roll his eyes, stiffen up and twitch his face. He would stutter and bite his lips before answering. Everything to Billy was a tragedy. The littlest thing worried him. Billy was chosen for the cast of "Fatso" and given a fairly difficult song on the basis of these needs: his interests (performing, improving his memory, and getting a job) and his musical talent, i.e., a strong singing voice and good sense of rhythm. Billy caught on pretty well when singing with the chorus, but when it came time to do his own song and scene, his poor memory was very evident. It took a long time for Billy to learn his song. Rehearsal time increased from three hours a week to three hours a day. I stuck with Billy, always leaving the option open for him to drop out. Billy did take the challenge and succeeded. He performed his scene and song, which included a soft shoe routine and remembered all he was supposed to remember on the nights of the performances at Delta. Billy said to me that no one ever stuck with him before and he was going to stick with it until he got it. Since the opening performances at Delta, Billy's continually told to calm down and stop twitching. When he calms down and concerns himself with not twitching, he remembers more things. Once Billy is convinced that he can "do it," he does it and does it well all the time. Once the activity is locked in Billy's head, however, there are no variations. Presently, Billy's stuttering and twitching have decreased, but he is still very tight. Medication has been suggested, but I am opposed to that at this time.
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 Billy has performed "Fatso" seven times, attended class five days a week for two hours each day, and was also involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. Billy's memory has increased significantly. He can remember specific concepts of the play and of theatre. He can remember because he understands what he is saying. He

Billy (cont'd)

Date	Report
	understand what he is saying because he thinks before he speaks. He is able to think because he is starting to calm down and stop twitching. Billy is continually told to calm down, and he knows that he is tight. Some days more than other days. Billy is now involved in two very difficult activities which require a lot of thinking for himself. At the present he is working on improving and expanding his scene in the play. This is difficult for Billy because when an activity is locked in Billy's head, there are no variations. The second activity is a student workshop on creative drama and "Process Theatre." Billy is doing extremely well in this new activity.

Billy's Statement:

I read Billy his evaluation and asked him, "How did you change in the past six months." He said, "I've changed a lot. I pay more attention in class. I've been trying to calm down and not be so nervous. I feel calmer than I did before. I am always trying to think more. I get numbers correct. I don't push people around anymore. I'm not pushy or shovey. I tell the truth more than before. I try not to tell lies. I used to get on Joe's nerves but now I don't. Joe's not yelling at me as much. He yelled at me because I didn't think. I think all this is happening because I wanted to change myself and I don't want to act like I used to act."

EVALUATIONS
(Dennis)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Dennis was enrolled in the music class. Dennis always wanted to be the center of attention in every class. Since he is high functioning, he caught on faster than most of the other students. He constantly was showing off his "talent." He would always look for approval from his teachers for the littlest thing. He also would criticize those who took longer to succeed and would call the lower functioning students "goons." Dennis was chosen for the chorus of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs, his interest in performing and his musical talent (he can play guitar and has a good sense of rhythm). Dennis was put in the chorus and treated roughly. He wasn't asked to do much but when he "blew it," he would be told "You want to show us what you can do, now do it right." This left Dennis feeling inferior. He worked harder and by the nights of the performances at Delta, he not only did his part well, but also carried the rest of the chorus and cued most of the dance numbers. He has started to initiate many of the activities in the class while considering others' parts in the activities. Dennis' social worker has considered his living in a co-op home, a step next to living alone. I find this a positive direction and a proof of his advancement.
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 Dennis has performed "Fatso" seven times, attended class five days a week for two hours each day, and was involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/ Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. Dennis is now living in a co-op home. He says he likes this. He still acts like a baby, e.g. always needs approval for every little thing he does, always asking how he is doing constantly telling the teachers how he is grown up and asks the same questions over and over again. Dennis was very successful in the chorus and as a result was given a scene and song. He replaces James. He has only performed it three times but has been very successful and has improved each time. He still has the regular duties of the lead chorus member. Dennis is still having trouble telling the difference between constructive and destructive criticism

Dennis (cont'd)

Date	Report
	but when he is called on his destructive criticism he handles it better, i.e. he doesn't start to cry and pout.

Dennis' Statement:

I read Dennis his evaluation and asked him, "How did you change in the past six months." He said, "I never did theatre before and now I did it. It may help me get a job in the future. It helped me make new friends and I got a girlfriend. I get along with people better than before. Before I was lost, now I'm not lost. I feel needed. I like to help others but before I didn't."

EVALUATIONS
(Kathy)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Kathy was enrolled in the creative drama class. During early creative drama activities, Kathy would not speak up in class. When asked a question she would lower her head and say in a high pitched voice and very softly "Well . . ." or some mousy noise. She would not initiate any actions in or outside of class. She would also not say if something did not suit her. Kathy was chosen for the chorus of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs and her interest in performing and in theatre. Kathy was given chorus duties that would single her out to build her confidence. For example, she was the first one on stage at the start of the play and was always directed in front of the chorus line. She was praised when she would look up and stand straight. Whenever she would initiate or suggest a movement within the play, I would tell her "That's it! Great suggestion!" and try it. Some worked and some didn't. Kathy started to speak up in class and suggest activities. Recently whenever Kathy reverts to saying "Well . . . ," dropping her head and rolling her eyes, I ignore her and wait for a definite "Yes or No" answer. As a result, her mousy responses have decreased and she is allowed more privileges.
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 Kathy has performed "Fatso" seven times, attended class five days a week for two hours each day, and was also involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. Kathy has been giving definite answers to questions. Sometimes however, when she's involved in something new she regresses to the "mousy" replies. Kathy initiates more conversations with her peers but still does not initiate activities in or outside of class. Kathy is involved in a student workshop which discusses creative drama and "Process Theatre." So far her participation has been minimal. On tour Kathy looks out for herself but must be continually reminded to hurry up. She's the slowest gal in the west.

Kathy (cont'd)

Kathy's Statement:

I read Kathy her evaluation and asked her, "How did you change in the past six months?" She said, "I talk more than I used to. I think more than I used to. I think about school. I think about the classes I'm in. I talk to people more. I like me better."

EVALUATIONS
(James)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. James was enrolled in the music class. He had grooming problems, e.g. shaving and bathing. Irrelevant comments within class time was a regular occurrence. James also had this attention getting trick of somehow placing himself in a seizure ending about five minutes before his bus came. James was chosen for the cast of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs, his desire to perform and musical talent. During the rehearsal period, James was continually told that if he expected to be "on stage" he would have to bathe and shave. He was also told that if he continued to have seizures, someone else would do his part. James' desire to perform was so great that as the performance dates neared, he started to shave and bathe. James also did not have a seizure for five weeks around the performances. Throughout the rehearsal period James' attention span increased. His irrelevant comments became minimal. During class his questions and comments did, at least indirectly, deal with the subject matter. Since the performance at Delta College, James has had two seizures. One because of girl problems and another because he was lost. Both times were for attention.
7/27/77	Supplement James' birthday is August 31. He has it locked in his head that he must be married and have a job by then. He went to visit the maintenance director on the hospital grounds to talk about work. I told James that if he ever expects to get a job "out there" he better stick with the play, because the play is his only means of contact with outside world. The performances at the California State Fair are before his birthday. I told James that he has a job. His job is right here with the play. His job is to sing and make people happy. His pay is love and joy. James constantly talked about getting a job at the service station. I told him that any dummy could work at the service station and that he is special. I told him that he must use his God-given talents to entertain.

James (cont'd)

Date	Report
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 James has performed "Fatso" five times, attended class five days a week for two hours each day, and was also involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. James lost his scene in the play but has not been dropped from the play. The reason he was put back into the chorus is because when he doesn't feel like working, he stands there, gives everyone this blank stare and refuses to move. He also does not keep himself groomed, e.g. not shaved or showered. James has been kept in the play because he will have to work just as hard but without all the glory, e.g. have his own song and scene, his own special show etc. James is told everyday that things like scenes and songs or other privileges must be earned. Since his demotion, James has not missed a cue or a single cast call. The biggest problem with James is his refusal to keep himself groomed. He still doesn't shave and shower often enough and still refuses to change clothes everyday. I have tried several ways to remedy this. For example, on Wednesday, December 7, 1977 I sent James home for not taking a bath and not shaving, later that afternoon I got a call from Dial-A-Ride asking for how long James was suspended. They told me that they had an awful day with James. He got on the wrong bus which took him to the mall, then took another wrong bus and finally got home about 4:00. He left the center around noon. This led me to believe that James was afraid to go home. When I called Mrs. Amos to tell her that James was coming home because of him not bathing and shaving she told me she was having trouble too. She would tell him he has to take a bath and shave or go without breakfast. He would go without breakfast sometimes for 4 days straight. Sometimes he won't get out of bed in the morning for school and tells Mrs. Amos he doesn't want to go. However, on the weekends he is out of bed by himself. Mrs. Amos has asked James how often he took a bath and shaved when he was in the State hospital and he said he took a bath once a week. She thinks that maybe because of that, James thinks all he needs is to take a bath once a week. I think James is just lazy. One of James' best reinforcers is money. One check comes each month without fail. He knows he will be fed sometime. Also at the Center James gets everything

James (cont'd)

Date	Report
	he wants. Pulling James out of activities just makes it easier on him. On February 3, 1978 after the Southern California tour James left his clothes in the rental van. I had to go get them, and had to wash and dry them. I charged James 50¢ for the wash, 25¢ for the dry, 25¢ for the detergent and 50¢ for labor ($1.50). He paid me. He knows exactly how much he has and has spent. I will be charging James for everything now.

James' Statement:

I read James his evaluation and asked him "How did you change in the past six months." He said, "I don't do the same things over and over again. I show better friendship with the students now than I did when I first started because I learned that making friends with other people was an important point. I don't have seizures anymore but I do have to be on my feet and keep my mind occupied so they don't come back anymore. I'm not acting the same way I used to act. I'm showing good behavior. I take care of my own business and not bother other people. I don't say things unless the teacher speaks to me first. I don't say just anything I want to say because I know that thinking comes first."

EVALUATIONS
(Dorothy)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Dorothy was enrolled in the creative drama class. During activities Dorothy had a hard time keeping her mind on the subject at hand. For example, during a storytelling activity she was not able to continue the story but would speak of something totally unrelated to the topic. She did not remember what she said or did during the activity. Dorothy's attention span was about five minutes. After that she would drift and daydream for the rest of the class. During creative drama activities she would always forget what she was told to do. It has to be repeated at least ten times. Dorothy was chosen for the chorus of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs, her interest in performing and her talent (she did well during improvisation activities). During the three month rehearsal period Dorothy, at first, was given little to do. When she remembered and did it she would ask "Are you proud of me for what I did?" Her reinforcement schedule was fixed so that she knew she was rewarded for remembering and not only did I say "Yes I am proud of you," but I gave her more to do. By the nights of the performances at Delta, Dorothy remembered the lyrics to all the chorus numbers, learned all the dances and was able to stay in "character" for the whole hour on stage. After the performance she asked me if I was proud of what she did on the stage. I asked her if she was proud. She said yes and I told her I'm proud that she is proud. Recently in class Dorothy can continually be called on and she is right on the topic. Her attention span has increased to last the entire class.
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77, Dorothy has performed "Fatso" seven times, attended class three days a week for two hours each day, and was involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/ Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. Dorothy makes an effort to keep her attention on the class. She can discuss certain concepts and can stay on the topic. She makes comments about what others have said in the class. On tour Dorothy takes care of herself very well. She doesn't have to be continually told what to do. She makes choices whether they are right or wrong and takes the criticism if they are wrong and tries to do better the next time.

Dorothy (cont'd)

Date	Report
	Dorothy never asks me if I'm proud of her after performances. She has replaced "Are you proud of what I did on stage?" by "I bet you are proud of what we all did on stage tonight," and "I'm proud of what I did, was it good?"

EVALUATIONS
(Brian)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Brian was enrolled in the creative drama class. When Brian was asked if he wanted to join in an activity he would say "It's alright . . . I don't care . . . if you want me to . . . I don't mind." Brian would participate but it always looked like such a burden. He never smiled or laughed. His body was extremely tight and rigid, e.g. when he was told to turn his head to the right, his whole body would turn. Brian never relaxed in class. Brian was chosen for the chorus of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs, his lack of self-motivated interest, and his talent (he showed potential during improvisations). During rehearsals Brian did everything he was supposed to do like a "good little boy." He would never join in the fun with the other students and still never smiled. Brian's performance the nights at Delta was adequate. Brian does everything adequately. Sometimes he shows signs of initiative but quickly extinguishes them. He is reinforced for initiating activities which happens very rarely. Brian gets little reinforcement for his advancement at the Center from his parents. They never come to see his performance. Until this situation is remedied, carry over from class cannot be expected.
1/31/78	Since 8/1/77 Brian has performed "Fatso" seven times, has attended class three days a week for two hours each day, and was involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/ Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. Brian dropped out of drama class at the beginning of the semester but asked to return. He was told that, he could be replaced and that if he dropped out again that was <u>it</u>. He was also told that if he <u>did</u> drop out, he would not be put in another specialty class, e.g. square dancing. He has to earn his right to be in these classes. Brian still gets little reinforcement for his advancement at the Center. This has become a continual stumbling block for him as well as his teachers. He always talks about "what suits" or "what is fitting." He says, "You're supposed to . . ." or "You have to . . ." He never speaks in the first person. On tour Brian acts like he is four years old.

Brian (cont'd)

Date	Report
	The only thing that he doesn't have to be told to do is to go to the bathroom.

EVALUATIONS
(Carol Anne)

Date	Report
7/7/77	On 3/1/77 two classes were formed, music and creative drama. Carol Anne was enrolled in the music class. Carol was very serious about school. She said that if she wasn't good and didn't "please the teacher," she would be put out. She had this fear of "not pleasing" others. She would always try to help the other students with their work even if they didn't want or need help. She would tell the other students "Do what the teacher says, you don't want to make him mad." Carol would never initiate actions or activities. Carol would never smile in class and always looked afraid of any authoritative figure. Carol was chosen for the cast of "Fatso" on the basis of these needs, her interest and talent. Carol was given the part of Dumpsy. She doesn't appear on stage until the last ten minutes of the play. One reason for giving her the part was that she was so interested in the others' actions and "pleasing the teacher" that I felt that being on stage a short time would be a start to remedy this. She was able to perform her part well but still insisted on playing mother to the cast. She was told not to tell anyone what to do just to worry about herself. She has to be told this constantly. Nothing more can be done with Carol presently due to a defeating home situation.

EVALUATIONS
(Virginia)

Date	Report
1/31/78	Virginia has joined the cast of "Fatso", and performed the play three times, attended class three times a week for two hours each day, and was involved in the recording of "The Laughing Song/Part of Our Sunshine" in August 1977. Virginia has a strong desire to be with her kids in Tennessee. She was told that if she could prove that she could take care of herself without continual direction she could be with them. Virginia does well when she wants to but gets very, very lazy and must be reminded about her situation. On tour Virginia took care of herself well and performed her part "Dumpsy" very professionally. This was only for three days at a time. However, the day after she did come to school to work. Virginia is also very enthusiastic about the Bell Choir in which she is also a member.

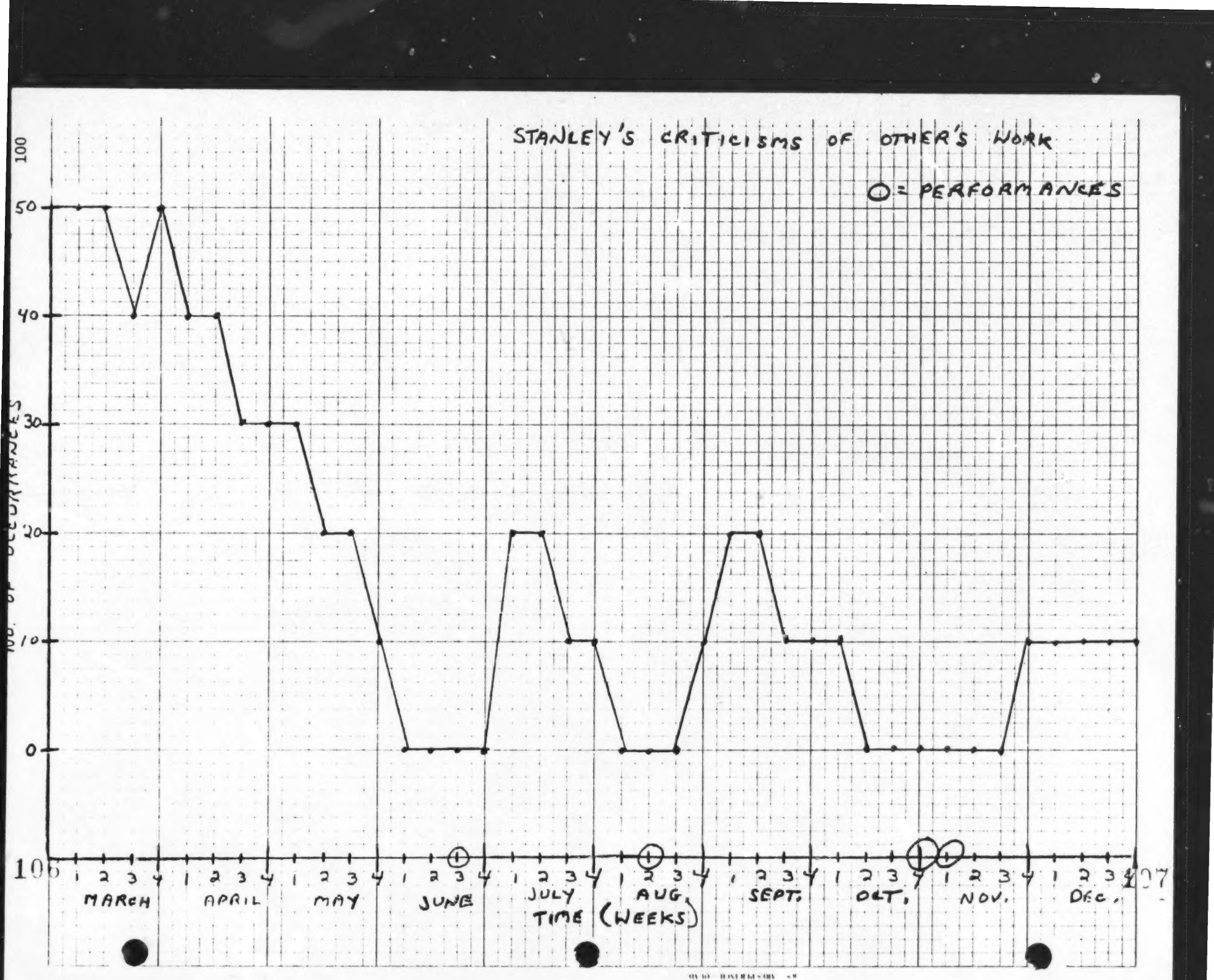
Since the instrument-method model is trying to develop skills and behaviors of individuals which usually handicap them in their environment, certain behaviors must be defined and evaluated with regard to specific growth. A single subject design, stemming from the research logic described by Sidman's Tactics of Scientific Research (1960) is useful in judging specific behavior tendency or change. A modified reversal design was applied to the behaviors. The dependent variable is the behavior and the independent variable is the model, with the method or treatment constantly being modified to meet the needs of the individual. By graphing the dependent variable over time, variability and trend (if any), of an isolated behavior, can be observed.

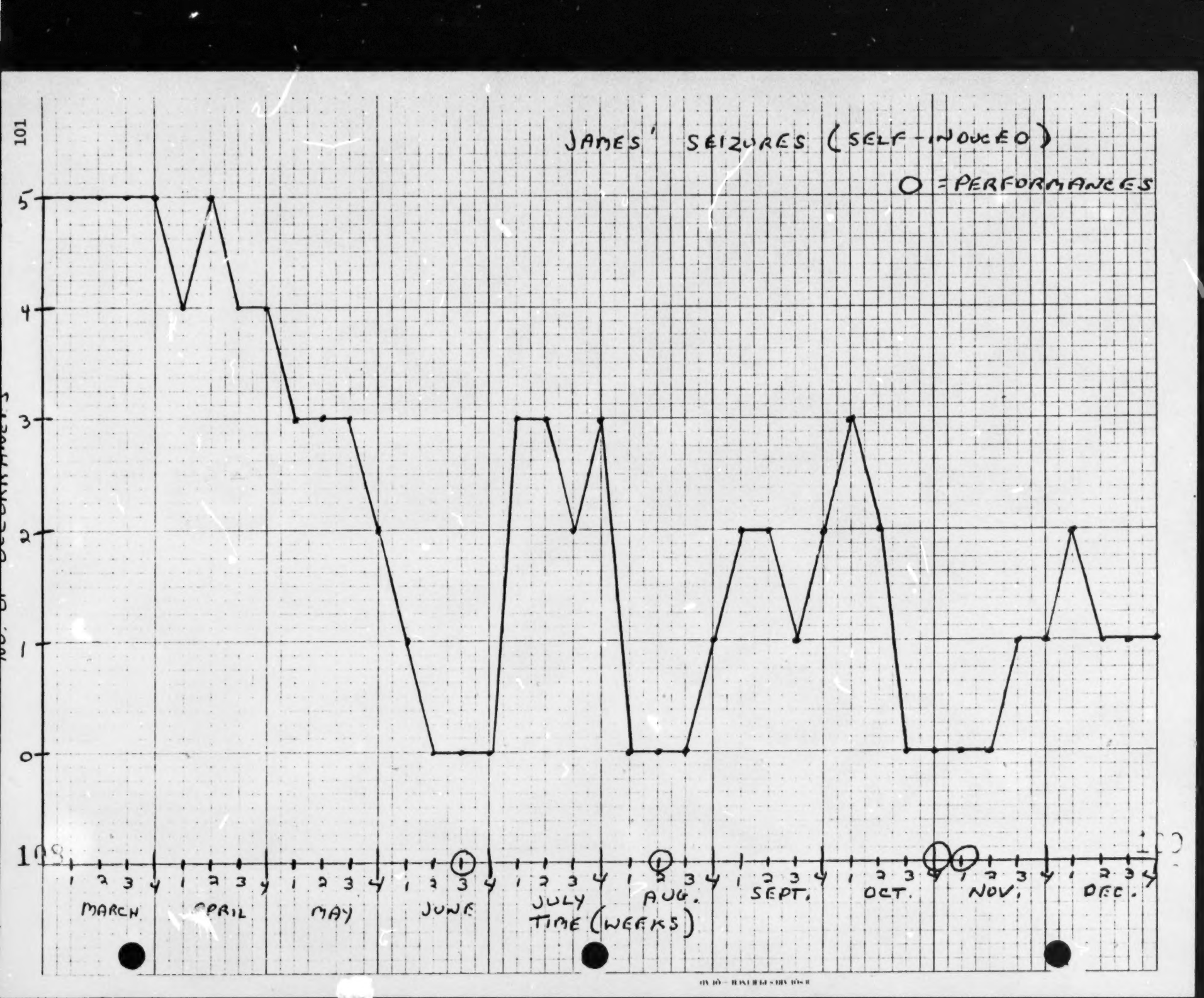
The following are five graphs of isolated behaviors, chosen by the students involved, as the specific "weakness" that he/she was trying to modify. Any behavior could be graphed in this way. Students should always be involved in all evaluations.

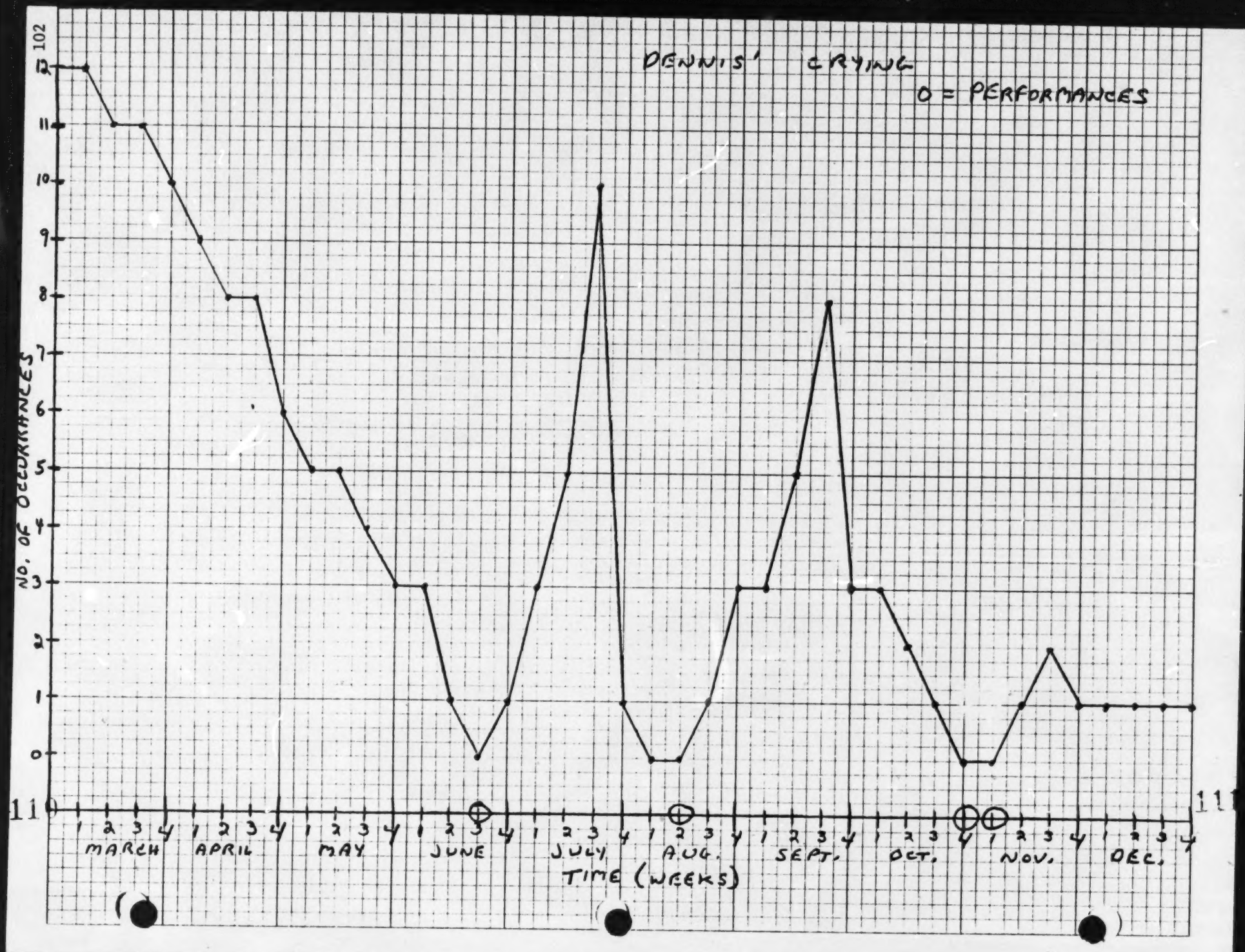
Based on this "instrument-method" model and its success with twelve exceptional individuals, "Process Theatre," a new approach to learning, development and normalization, was developed. It is now being replicated in other settings and with other individuals. The instrument used in Process Theatre is by no means limited to theatre. Theatre, as an art form, was used here because it has the capability of artistically describing and reenacting a segment of life. It is also a culmination of many arts and provides an opportunity for a

public display of the implementation of the model.

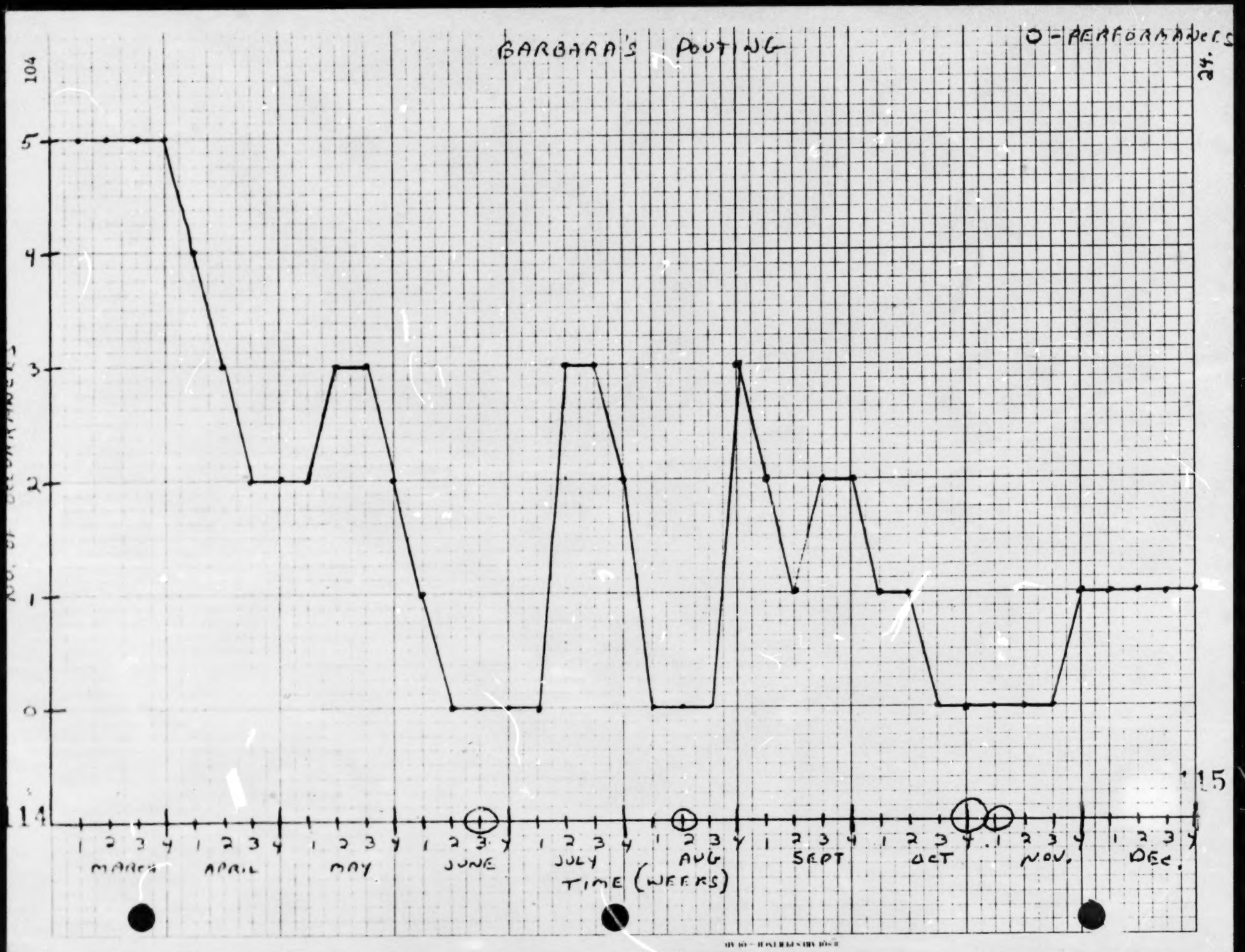
The Process Theatre model is not limited to exceptional individuals but provides a learning and developmental alternative for all individuals, because each one of its elements is designed in the interest of the continuing growth and development of human beings--all human beings.


STANLEY'S CRITICISMS OF OTHER'S WORK
O = PERFORMANCES
100
50
40
30
20
10
0
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG.
SEPT.
OCT.
NOV.
DEC.
TIME (WEEKS)


JAMES' SEIZURES (SELF-INDUCED)
O = PERFORMANCES
5
4
3
2
1
0
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG.
SEPT.
OCT.
NOV.
DEC.
TIME (WEEKS)


102
DENNIS' CRYING
O = PERFORMANCES
NO. OF OCCURRANCES
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG.
SEPT.
OCT.
NOV.
DEC.
TIME (WEEKS)

JOHN'S PACING
⊕ = PERFORMANCES
103
50
40
30
20
10
0
2
13
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG.
SEPT.
OCT.
NOV.
DEC.
TIME (WEEKS)


BARBARA'S POUTING
O - PERFORMANCES
104
24.
5
4
3
2
1
0
-1
15
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG
SEPT
OCT
NOV.
DEC.
TIME (WEEKS)

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EXCEPTIONAL THEATRE MEETS EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS

by

Joseph Parente, MMT and Alice Ball, RMT

"FATSO - a new musical" and "PROCESS THEATRE - a new approach" have emerged over the past three years and are ready to be shared with those interested in a creative means of working with exceptional individuals. The musical, "FATSO" and a workshop on "PROCESS THEATRE" have toured throughout the country, including to the 1978 national convention of the American Theatre Association in New Orleans, Louisiana. Articles in the December, 1977 and August, 1979 issues of Theatre News outline the principles of "PROCESS THEATRE" and the accomplishments of the original cast of "FATSO".

"FATSO" is an original musical written for individuals with special developmental needs, which, when produced and performed with a professional attitude, has meaning for them as artists, actors, and people, has universal meaning for audiences, and is a good theatrical piece. "FATSO" makes it possible for exceptional theatre groups to create a professional theatrical production, which is instrumental in developing life skills and behaviors of each artist involved, which will help him/her interact more effectively with his/her environment. "FATSO - a new musical" is not only the first theatrical work of its kind, but also the first musical available for professional productions by theatre groups of/with exceptional individuals.

"PROCESS THEATRE"— an approach to learning— involves exceptional individuals in a gradual developmental process designed to meet the specific needs of the artist and still create a legitimate

artistic product. Rather than "adapting" theatre to the "level" of the handicapped, Process Theatre raises the handicapped individual to the high quality level of skill and performance needed for artistic accomplishment. Primary emphasis, however, is placed on the learning, growth, and self-actualization acquired by these individuals in order to achieve that high quality level of performance.

The book of "FATSO" which contains that process necessary to produce the musical, complete with music and lyrics, is available for production by other directors. Inquiries regarding acquisition of the musical should be directed to Joseph Parente, 2433 Country Club Blvd. #82, Stockton, California, 95204. The techniques of "PROCESS THEATRE" are currently being shared through workshops with other groups working in the field of developmental services. Inquiries regarding scheduling of training workshops should be sent to Alice Ball, 4332 Pacific Ave. #6, Stockton, California, 95207.